



PHD

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ARGUMENT

submitted by T.J. Smithin  
for the degree of Ph.D.  
of the University of Bath  
1983

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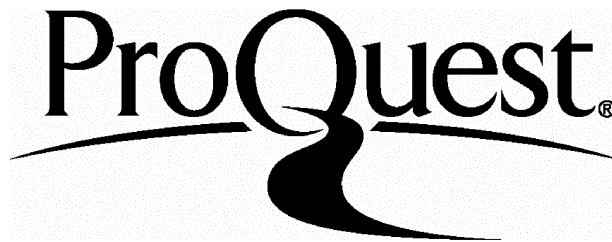
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## ABSTRACT

### Argument

This thesis is concerned with the study of argument in organizational settings. It proposes that argument as a means of persuading others has been neglected in favour of an emphasis on the social and political aspects of organizational life. Using the Theory of Personal Constructs and the techniques of Cognitive Mapping a new theory of argument is developed which attempts to incorporate man as a valuing and a reasoning being. Three research settings in which argument had a significant influence are studied, and the use of Cognitive Mapping as a practical aid to representing and developing argument is described.

## CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
<u>CHAPTER 1 - FRAMEWORKS FOR ARGUMENT</u>	6
General metaphors of argument	6
Rationality and argument	8
The appeal of rational argument	11
The ethical appeal of rationality	12
The bait of sure and certain knowledge	13
Towards a framework for practical argument	15
Thinking as a logical process	16
Thinking as a subjectively rational process	17
Subjective theories of thinking	19
Definitions of argument	24
A framework for the study of argument	26
Summary of Chapter 1	32
<u>CHAPTER 2 - REPRESENTING ARGUMENT</u>	35
Introduction	35
The nature of thinking	35
Representing cognitive systems	36
Non language based aspects of cognition	40
Cognitive mapping as a representation of argument	41
Computer aid and cognitive mapping	48
Some models of thinking compared	52
Balance theory	52
Argumentation studies	55
Modality and Certainty	58
Methodology	61
An appropriate methodology	63
Summary of Chapter 2	69

## CONTENTS (continued)

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
<u>CHAPTER 3 - ARGUMENT AND VALUING</u>	72
Introduction	72
The research setting	72
The use of personal diaries	73
Hartley - early stages	77
Hartley - change of mind	84
Hartley - a political storm	86
Hartley - defusing the row	87
A description of arguments	88
Analysis of the Hartley issue	88
Computer analysis argument and values	94
The value framework	103
The development of cognitive systems	105
Argument and debate	107
Summary of Chapter 3	108
Appendix to Chapter 3	111
 <u>CHAPTER 4 - ARGUMENT AND DEBATE</u>	 112
Introduction	112
Sociality and argument	113
Commonality and argument	119
Facts and themes	121
The problem of inconsistency	123
Understanding inconsistency	125
Resolving inconsistency	127
Counteracting inconsistency	129
Predicting man	131
Right or wrong?	132
Summary of Chapter 4	134
Appendix to Chapter 4	137



## CONTENTS (continued)

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
<u>CHAPTER 5 - ARGUMENT IN PROGRESS</u>	138
Introduction	138
The research setting	138
Methodological issues of action research	150
Later stages of the research process	153
Common construal - inhibiting social facts	154
Re-construal as an argumentative force	157
Values and persuasion	160
The performance of argument	162
Different types of argument	169
Summary of Chapter 5	172
Appendix to Chapter 5	175
 <u>CHAPTER 6 - ARGUMENT DESIGNED TO PERSUADE</u>	 184
Introduction	184
The research setting	184
Background to capital punishment in the U.K.	185
An influential debate?	186
Research methods	194
Facts and statistics	197
Consistency	200
Expectations, argument and sociality	203
Values	205
Countering assertions	209
Vicious circles and inevitable consequences	211
Summary of Chapter 6	213
Appendix to Chapter 6	228

## CONTENTS (continued)

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
<u>CHAPTER 7 - A GOOD CASE FOR ARGUMENT?</u>	229
End of an argument	229
The task of this thesis	230
Making sense of argument	234
Practical methods for the study of argument	235
Collecting and representing	237
Analysis	239
A theory of argument	240
When argument is significant	241
Consistency and persuasive argument	243
The influence of the taken for granted world	244
Values and persuasive argument	246
Further research	247
Conclusion	249
<u>REFERENCES</u>	252

## INTRODUCTION

### ARGUMENT

This thesis is concerned with the study of argument as a means of persuading others, in particular with the role of argument in contributing to influence and change in organizational life. Explicit discussion of argument is strangely neglected in accounts of organizational life, yet a significant portion of that life is spent in preparing and rehearsing arguments that are going to be used in an attempt to influence decisions and future policy. This suggests that individuals are well aware of the persuasive force that a 'good' argument is capable of producing, or conversely are sensitive to the dangers of putting forward untested arguments. There is something about 'having a good case', as Thorndike describes it:

"For certain types of questions at least, there is a certain inherent logic and plausability in the right choice which makes it more possible to build up a good argument on that side..."  
(Thorndike 1931).

Neglect of argument as a topic in its own right is probably closely associated with the rationalistic and objective overtones that traditional studies of argument generally foster. Within the context of organizational behaviour it would seem worthwhile to follow a similar programme to that suggested by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) in the realm of argumentation research. That is to re-consider argument as a means of persuading others, rather than as a study in logical thought. This would begin to provide theories and practices which can be used to more effectively construct and debate arguments within organizations.

The following chapters tackle the nature of argument in theory and in practice based on field work in three different research settings. Chapter 1 discusses the nature of argument in general terms, and considers some of the issues involved in discussing a topic which is more frequently placed in a rational, scientific, logical framework, within the subjective and interpersonal framework which characterizes much of knowledge of organizational behaviour. Chapter 2 continues the theme of Chapter 1 in a more precise way and develops methods of recording and analysing argument through Personal Construct Theory, and Cognitive Mapping. Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 use this framework to look at argument in different situations and with data obtained in different ways. From these chapters hypotheses about the effectiveness of argument emerge and are evaluated. Chapter 7 draws some conclusions from the work presented.

To discuss argument is inevitably to discuss the nature of interpersonal relations within a social setting, yet the notion that the 'argument' can be isolated and treated in isolation as a separate entity from the arguer is a common one, both in theoretical research and everyday life. We less rarely say 'John argued well', we rather say 'John put forward a good argument'. The extent to which it is possible to separate 'John' and the 'argument' in terms of the influence which the event of 'John arguing' can exert, is a fundamental issue in discussing the nature of argument. An example may illustrate this better.

As a partner in a firm of management and computer consultants I was recently presented with the following argument over the important

issue of how we should divide our time over future projects, by a fellow partner. The extracts are adapted slightly from notes taken at the time.

PAUL: "...I think we ought to concentrate on the Homeworthy venture. a lot of the programming is already done, and the budget gives us plenty of time to work up a cutting algorithm... It should not be too difficult as the basic steps can be taken from the algorithms that we already have..."

My response was:

TIM: "... should we really put all our eggs in one basket, what if we get stuck on the algorithm, it's a very complex area you know, we'd then have committments that we could not fulfil, what about the printing project, at least this is something we've tackled before..."

When studying this sort of interchange in the context of argument a primary question is, "to what extent is each participant influenced by the content of the other's argument", that is by the substantive case that they have put forward, in contrast to any other factors which may influence them. For instance, my partner had apparently interpreted the event as one in which he needs to put forward some sort of case about our capabilities for completing the project. But I was conscious in framing my reply of a number of factors potentially influencing me.

Paul will be disapointed if I say no.

I was originally annoyed that the project had been taken taken on by him without prior consultation.

I was more interested in the Printing project.

I thought that, as usual, Paul was underestimating the size of the task.

Paul does know a lot about cutting algorithms.

It was true that a lot of the basic programming had been completed.

It was a generous budget.

So in assessing my partner's case on our capabilities I am also including my values, a judgement of his expertise, interpersonal issues, and his substantive argument. Any one of these may be sufficient to effectively ignore the influence of each of the others.

To look at argument as a means of persuasion in this type of situation, which is not untypical of the field work in this thesis, is to attempt to determine the contribution that argument makes to the interaction. What is meant in this context by argument is better illustrated by the interactions within each research setting but a general guideline is:

"Argument is an attempt to persuade others to a point of view or course of action, by a set of linked propositions, through the use of language."

This is what is intended in this thesis by the use of words argument, substantive case, debate, and reasoned debate. There are many other ways in which my Business Partner could have attempted to influence me, for example, by taking me for a drink, or by threatening to resign if I did not support him. To some extent these other ways have been ignored in this work, which focusses on argument as such. But the features of an event which encourage participants to interpret it as one in which argument can occur, as opposed to some other sort of event are important aspects of understanding argument.

I have often felt that many recent theories of organizational life have shied away from a study of arguing man, almost in a belief that reason and argument necessarily fall prey to the political and social whims of powerful actors. Yet whenever I have been involved in

organizational change, preparing a good case and attending to the internal politics seem to have proceeded hand in hand. I am motivated therefore to look again at a study of argument as a means of persuading others, and so add to our armoury of aids for coping with organizational life.

## CHAPTER 1

### FRAMEWORKS FOR ARGUMENT

#### General metaphors of argument

Some insight into the nature of argument is provided by individuals' reactions and comments when their point of view has failed to gain acceptance with colleagues (Wilensky 1967). Some illustrative remarks are:

"it was all sewn up before I went in..."

"we were right but they won't admit it..."

"he's just totally irrational... he won't listen to reason"

Although such reflections are sometimes a way of explaining failure to others and reveal the arguer's concern with his lack of influence (Meltsner 1979), they also point to expectations that the arguer has about the nature of the event in which he was involved. Such expectations about argument as a rational process not only imply criteria on which the argument should be decided but also prescribe the roles to be taken by the arguer and audience. Broadly speaking there is an implication that the argument be decided by reference to its content and structure alone, and that the audience should behave as objective and non-involved participants. 'Non-involved' means that the participants do not take into account the consequences of the argument for their personal values and beliefs (Rokeach 1973). It also suggests that the argument is open to examination on primarily logical grounds, and that there are non-personal objectives (such as an organizational goal), against which the argument can be assessed.

In an organizational context this is put most succinctly by Ackoff in a discussion on the nature of Operational Research:



"The prevailing concept of objectivity is based on a distinction between ethical-moral man who is believed to be emotional, involved and biased, and scientific man who is believed to be unemotional, uninvolved and unbiased."

(Ackoff 1979,(i))

This notion of argument as a rational, objective activity, has considerable influence on individual actions, and the means that are used to attempt to persuade others. For example Operational Research and Management Science are disciplines which have developed under the encompassing banner of "the application of science to management", consequently the style of argument used by a large proportion of those involved in these activities takes the form of argument as a rational process. This not only colours the arguments that are presented, but also the role that is seen as appropriate by those within the discipline. This is quite readily seen especially in early Operational Research work, but the 'scientific' overtones of Operational Research also influence current debate (Collcutt 1981, Tate 1977, Tocher 1961). The Operational Researcher is often portrayed in this model as the discoverer of 'the' problem and its consequent solution. The nature of the interaction with the client becomes that of expert advisor and layman. In this setting the means of persuading the client that solutions should be implemented often takes the form of 'rational' argument in which the O.R. worker has only to communicate his findings to the client for them to find acceptance. If the client is a rational being and the findings are rationally based, then no other persuasion is needed. Replacing the word 'rational' with the word 'scientific' makes the above argument a very familiar one in reports of Operational Research projects (White

1975). Whilst no Operational Researcher indulges in, or believes that this is all that is involved in his work (Rivett 1981), nonetheless it is a basic metaphor which influences research and practice (Dando and Sharp 1978). This metaphor similarly influences other disciplines for example economic studies, (Smithin J.N. 1980, Begg 1980). The adequacy of this metaphor is not at issue here. Of interest in the context of argument are the close links between the concepts of argument, objectivity and rationality, and the way in which adoption of these metaphors tends to preclude attention to social and political factors. For instance it is not uncommon within O.R. literature and informal discussion between O.R. workers to hear the failure of a piece of work to be implemented by the client, described as a failure of the client to fully appreciate the implications of the work (the client is irrational), rather than as an inappropriate piece of Operational Research (Rice 1981).

#### Rationality and argument

Argumentation studies normally focus upon this metaphor of argument as an essentially rational process, with the consequent allusions to objectivity and non-involvement that this entails. The prevailing model for argument is that of a court of law, and the interaction between an advocate and a jury. As in judicial proceedings the jury are asked to put aside their personal opinions and prejudices and consider the argument 'on its merits'. The process of argument is therefore primarily concerned with the nature of claims and their relation to evidence. Again there is often an underlying assumption that it is possible to establish the truth or otherwise of any claim that is put forward (Thouless 1974). Within the literature few assume

that personal values and bias do not influence events, but there is an assumption that the argument may in theory proceed independently of the arguers. Such a model could be dismissed as more of a prescription of how decisions ought to be made rather than a description of the decision making process. Yet studies of mock juries (Baldwin and McConville 1979) suggest that individuals take very seriously the role of unbiased observer, and make stringent and explicit efforts 'to be fair'. In a similar way senior managers are often anxious to describe themselves as people who take advantage of rational decision aids. The use of outside experts is one example of this. Such experts are often cast by the manager (and by themselves) as unbiased observers whose advice, as a consequence of this lack of bias, must be given extra weight (Sims and Smithin 1982). Wilensky (1967) describes the effect of a new budgeting system within an American governmental agency as:

"The experience appears to have satisfied a longing to believe that they were proceeding according to the canons of rational methods of calculation"

The court of law model of argument is more restricted than the analogy might initially suggest. Whilst in practice lawyers may be concerned with a variety of means of influencing the jury, argumentation studies and courses (Anderson and Dovre 1968) have focussed almost exclusively on the nature of evidence and its presentation. For example many textbooks on argumentation treat the process of argument as one of logical reasoning. By this is meant the manipulation of premises and conclusions through the rules of inductive and deductive logic; examples of the following sort appear frequently:

All industrial concerns need to make profits  
Organization X is an industrial concern  
Organization X needs to make profits

So, for instance, Bell and Staines (1979) urge potential arguers to examine arguments (written and verbal) for the logical connections between the statements. Errors in argument therefore arise from logical errors and common fallacies in the use of syllogisms (Kirwan 1978, Geach 1976). The lack of persuasive force of an argument is attributed to logical inadequacies of this sort rather than to any other cause. Work on human thinking by researchers into artificial intelligence is perhaps the most recent example of the application of rational assumptions to theories of organizational behaviour. For example many recently produced expert systems work on logical and statistical models of argument (Duda and Gaschnig 1981, Newell and Simon 1971). There is a close link here to work on decision theory, which provides further examples of rational assumptions about argument and decision making (Raiffa 1970, Simon 1957, Kaufmann and Thomas 1977).

The issues that arise from argumentation studies, decision theory, and some expert systems work often seem to be of more interest to logicians and philosophers than to managers (Smithin and Eden 1984). They concentrate on the performance and competence of human actors with respect to formal logical reasoning, as opposed to the wider ranging ability to structure debate in a persuasive manner. This emphasis upon rationality and logical reasoning as an essential part of argument carries with it some powerfully influential assumptions about the nature of argument, and it is difficult to separate an

understanding of argument from these rationalistic overtones. What is the appeal of this very prevalent view of argument?

#### The appeal of rational argument

Rational expectations about argument are prevalent and influential, so it is worthwhile considering the source of their influence in more detail. For a modern worker, a practical problem arises immediately in such a discussion, since notions of reason and rationality cannot be easily disentangled from a discussion of scientific thinking and logical positivism. Notions and norms about reason and rationality are so much a part of western culture that it is difficult to view such ideas as particular aspects of this culture, they seem rather to be embedded in the nature of man himself. Yet the idea of a rational argument and its firm link to a method of acquiring knowledge is something which has developed from the work of Galileo, Descartes, and Newton. Roszak for example sees it as a psychological reaction to the religious intolerance and scholastic thought that was prevalent in Descartes' time (Roszak 1972, Descartes 1637, Ree 1974).

Aristotle's view of argument and Descartes' are as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca point out set within very different frameworks and purposes. For Descartes the purpose of rational argument was to challenge the intellectual climate of his day, to challenge the influence of religious doctrine. For Greeks of significant social standing, the ability to present a good case was essential to survival in the democratic state (Sanders 1970, Allen 1966). So there is a sense in which understandings of the nature of reason and rationality are linked to particular social and political trends and are not necessarily inherent to man's being. That methods of

argument are similarly linked is illustrated by the contempt with which Machol recently described 14th century philosophical argument (Machol 1980) and the contrasting seriousness of the debate in the eyes of contemporary observers (Russell 1946). It might therefore be possible to re-cast a view of argument and rationality into a framework which is more helpful to the practical study of argument. To do this however, a more detailed understanding of the essential appeal of rational argument is needed.

The appeal of rational argument seems to have two fundamental bases:

- a) An ethical appeal to argue in a particular way
- b) The bait of sure and certain knowledge which may be obtained by arguing in a particular way

These are each discussed in the following sections.

#### (a) The ethical appeal of rationality

The 'summons of a civilized dialogue' is essentially an appeal for reasoning man to behave in a particular way, and qualities are demanded such as candour, patience, emotional coldness, self control, and detachment. That the scientific/rational appeal is in part an ethical and moral one is nicely illustrated in a well known statement by the scientist Karl Pearson:

"The scientific man has above all things to strive for self-elimination in his judgements, to provide an argument which is as true for each individual mind as for his own."

(Pearson 1937)

As a moral statement it is also a moral assertion about the nature of knowledge. What is to count as true knowledge is defined in a

particular way, so that pre-scientific, or non-scientific knowledge is inferior to knowledge gained through the process of rational inquiry. Similarly arguments which have a base in personal experience have less validity than properly rational arguments. It is only necessary to observe, or feel, the emotions aroused when someone is accused of being irrational in the course of an argument to realize the moral appeal that rational argument carries. As Ayer (1936) and Koyre (1965) state the 'merely subjective' (note the merely) has no place in the ontology of rational thought.

A recent example of the acceptance of the consequences of the moral appeal of rationality is that of the psychologist Skinner who explicitly rejects any analysis of behaviour in terms of the purposes and values of subjects, since this cannot become knowledge of a sufficiently 'pure' kind (Skinner 1938, 1953). Note that the principal reason for his behaviourist approach is not that cognitive psychology is wrong in its treatment of experience, but that it is unable or unlikely to provide data and theories of a sufficiently scientific (as Skinner defines it) kind. More practically this concept of rationality makes consideration of purposive behaviour problematic since it is specifically designed to exclude subjective information.

#### (b) The bait of sure and certain knowledge

The bait of sure and certain knowledge is also an attractive appeal of rationality. Observation and logical inference lead to knowledge which is as 'secure as numbers'. Rational argument leads by unambiguous paths from statements which are self-evident (or at least

agreed), by simple steps, to conclusions which are more complex, but equally sure. This link between the psychological experience of self evidence and the process of reasoning (the essence of Cartesian analysis) rests on assumptions of cognitive simplicity and cognitive linearity. That is the rules of reasoning are essentially simple rules, and that cognitive material is organized into discrete units (what Abelson for example calls implicational molecules (Abelson 1973)).

It has become clear through the work of Wittgenstein (1969) and Moore's analysis of the concept of certainty (Moore 1939) that the idea of self-evidence, as used here, does not only imply something which is evident to self. But it can only be meaningful to say that something is self-evident, if it would also be self-evident to any other human being presented with the same situation. This is in part what being certain means. Thus rational argument through self-evidence is linked to certainty. It is this link to certainty which produces the compulsive power of this approach to argument (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969).

An interesting historical example of this use of the power of rationality is discussed by Eden and Harris (1975). In their analysis of decision making studies of the 1950's and 1960's they show how early theories relied heavily upon rational deductive logic in order to draw conclusions about the nature of good and bad decisions. Such approaches relied primarily upon statistical and scientific methods to assess managerial arguments and decisions. Dissatisfaction arose, Eden and Harris suggest, because of the mismatch between the criteria



demanded by a rational approach and situation specific criteria used by decision makers.

#### Towards a framework for practical argument

The discussion of rationality and rational argument is intended to point out the powerful and subtle influences which the notion of rationality brings to bear on the process of argument. There is throughout an implicit assumption that any attempt to discuss argument solely in these terms is not adequate. This theme is developed in the following sections. Within the context of argument, however, it is crucial to recognize that because rational argument is inadequate as a vehicle this does not mean that notions of rational argument can be easily dismissed (Reardon 1981). As the foregoing sections indicate, notions of rationality are ubiquitous and influential in any argument.

However, 'much of psychological literature suggests that rational decision making is not the empirically dominant mechanism of choice' (Stein 1977), and that plans for action finally rest on political and value laden judgements. The study of argument faces what Stein calls, in the context of policy making, the paradox of psychological logic.

It is therefore necessary to construct a theory of argument which can embrace both the rational and the valuing aspects of man. A first step in doing this is to look more closely at the nature of thinking and reasoning. The following sections examine a number of different theories of reasoning which have different degrees of adherence to a model of man as a rational being.

### Thinking as a logical process

A typical entry in a dictionary (Garmonsway 1965) defines argument as "reason urged in support of a theory". But what is involved in the process of reasoning? To answer this question is to look at reasoning as psychological rather than a philosophical process. Henle (1962) was a psychologist who perhaps most closely linked the philosophical and psychological processes of reasoning. He proposed that although individuals do not usually observe or indulge explicitly in careful syllogistic argument, nonetheless the processes which the mind goes through are governed by the same rules as the formal syllogism. He quotes Kant as saying "logic is a science of the necessary laws of thought, without which no employment of the understanding and the reason takes place". The laws of logic are the laws of thought. In various forms this idea has been enormously influential on the course of experimental psychology in the realm of thinking and reasoning (see Flew 1975 for an overview). Much of the work of Wason and Johnson-Laird (1972) and Abercrombie (1960) for instance, has been concerned with the individual's ability to perform acts of deductive and inductive reasoning. These tasks are also closely linked with studies of problem solving ability. Central to these theories is the examination of the ability to reason from simple statements to more complex statements in a linear way. Very often the tasks assigned to individuals are relatively simple puzzles, simple in the sense that the description of the problem only includes a small number of variables. The difficulties of translating the results of these studies into situations which are not closely

controlled is well known but nonetheless reveal thinking as a propositional activity. That is, hypotheses are formed then tested and changed in an attempt to make sense of a situation. More interesting in this context are studies which consider the effect of the use of logic in everyday situations. Dickson (1981), in his study of managerial decision making, found that many managers were prepared (at least publicly) to change their views when inconsistencies of a logical nature were pointed out to them, in this case inconsistencies in rank ordering of utilities. More generally, the study of folk lore and simple aphorisms makes the point that cultural wisdom carries with it many general lessons about logical (syllogistic) argument. For example, the expression "one swallow does not make a summer" warns against arguing from the particular to the general, in this way it represents a cultural distillation of issues to do with inductive reasoning. Many other categories of syllogistic style are similarly covered by tales and aphorisms. Logic does play a part in reasoning, but perhaps as a background to other features (Abrahams 1968, Goodwin and Wenzel 1979).

#### Thinking as a subjectively rational process

It is significant that many of the studies of logic and reasoning work with relatively simple problems. Study of more complex scenarios, such as those faced by managers in organizations, quickly produces a realization that cognitive abilities are necessarily limited, by lack of time, by lack of access to information, and by the range of options that need to be attended to. In such a circumstance the strict requirements of logical analysis are unable to cope. The Abelson-Rosenberg theory of psycho logic (Abelson 1973)

envisages individuals acting in a subjectively rational way, by which is meant that human beings reason according to predictable mental processing rules but these rules do not necessarily correspond to those of formal logic. Individuals reason within a personally defined context. Cognitive material is organized into implicational molecules and each individual molecule is self contained. As with strictly logical models there is an assumption of cognitive simplicity and linearity, so that the construction of knowledge is an inferential 'building block' process. This 'if-then' thinking characterizes a common feature of human thinking. Armstrong and Eden (1979) describe a technique of 'Socratic questioning' which explores implicational thinking in exactly this way. By asking individuals a simple 'why' question they were able to elicit implication chains of this nature.

The theories of cognitive consistency and of related theories such as Heider's Balance Theory are similarly based on a notion of subjective rationality (Heider 1946, Cartwright and Harary 1956). A simple Balance Theory model is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis. The predictive value of the theory lies in the rationality assumption of consistency in that if P likes O and P likes M, but M does not like O, then there is likely to be some tension or problem for P which would need to be resolved either at a higher level of balance or in some additional construction. However consider the response of P if asked about this issue, he may say:

"It's not an issue for me. I like people who disagree with me."

In this circumstance the more global assumptions of consistency are

unable to access the reasoning of this individual. To understand or argue with this individual more information is needed. As Abelson points out in relation to consistency, it all depends on what you mean by 'like'. Such general rules about consistency are in practice continually broken, since there are many situations in which individuals prefer the novelty of inconsistency, or the excitement of imbalance (Maddi 1969, Maddi and Berne 1964, Abelson 1969).

In addition to these problems of meaning produced by subjectively rational theories, there are other difficulties in understanding individual reasoning which are now considered in the light of subjective theories of thinking.

#### Subjective theories of thinking

Thinking as a logical process or as a personally consistent one are essentially theories of thinking set within a rational scientific framework, and whilst the influence of themes of consistency and rationality may be very large within our society, a more subjectively oriented theory seems to be needed to explain individual behaviour. A basis for such a theory comes from Ackoff's distinction between Rational Man and Emotional Man (Ackoff 1979, (i),(ii)).

The description of man implied by the previous section is that of man as a self-consistent, reasoning being. So far, implicitly, the expression 'providing a reason' has been taken to mean 'explaining a statement (or action) in terms of other statements and the conclusions which may be drawn from them'. Yet often when individuals are asked to provide a reason for what they say or do this is not a request for them to make their argument structure

explicit, but is a request for them to make explicit some of the values that they hold. As Fisher says:

"Humans as rhetorical beings are as much valuing as they are reasoning animals."

(Fisher 1978)

Wallace's discussion of the logic of good reasons emphasizes the place of values in any discussion of argument or reasoning:

"A good reason is a statement offered in support of an ought proposition or of a value judgement"

(Wallace 1963)

But what is implied by man as a valuing animal? Rokeach's definition of value has been widely used and quoted:

"to say that a person 'has a value' is to say that he has an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally and socially preferable to alternative modes of conduct or end states of existence."

(Rokeach 1973)

As Eden, Jones and Sims (1979) point out, whilst such a definition may be conceptually helpful, the notion of value is difficult to apply operationally. It is easy to sympathize with the despairing tone of Bowen's article, which recognizes both the need for and the difficulty of accounting for values in organizational research (Bowen 1979). Operational pointers suggested by Eden, Jones and Sims include:

internal commitment  
 can't say why, it just is  
 criteria for judging outcomes

This is one of the few approaches which recognizes the significance of looking at 'values' as 'the act of valuing', rather than attempting to categorize or define particular values. The act of categorization (eg: good, happiness, egalitarian society) must inevitably face the same problem of Abelson's cognitive consistency, in that it all depends on what you mean by happiness. The categorization approach also makes it difficult to account for the more dynamic aspects of value. For example, as particular values are pursued the nature of that which is pursued changes.

To describe man as a valuing animal is not to describe particular values that he has, but to make a statement about human activity, to point towards a 'striving' quality that characterizes human life. This aspect is captured in Kelly's theory of Personal Constructs:

"To our way of thinking there is a continuing movement towards the anticipation of events, rather than a series of barter for temporal satisfaction, and this movement is the essence of human life itself."  
 (Kelly 1963)

For his metaphor of man Kelly looks to another aspect of the scientist, not the scientist as a rational, detached observer, but the scientist as an inveterate inquirer into the world of his experience.

Valuing man behaves purposively. Such an activity may sometimes be described as a striving towards an explicit end state (as for Rokeach), even though that end state is not thought to be attainable

(Ackoff and Emery 1972), or it may be described as a less focussed desire to move away from a given current state of affairs (Eden 1978).

A subjective theory of thinking needs to capture the nature of man as a valuing animal, and the influence of values on the process of reasoning. The theory of personal constructs (Kelly 1955), is a theory which attempts to account for individual behaviour in terms of the ways in which an individual makes sense of his experience. The fundamental postulate of Construct theory states that:

"A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the way in which he anticipates events.

The process of placing an interpretation on experience, of construing, arises from the individual attending to the replicative nature of experience, and differentiating one aspect of that experience from another. This differentiation, or construct, then forms part of a larger construct system, which guides the construing process (Kelly 1977).

For example, from the experience of knowing Peter, Stefan and Mary an individual may construe that Peter and Stefan are friendly whereas Mary is aloof. The construct 'friendly...aloof' forms a basis for placing an interpretation on other aspects of experience (eg: other friends). The replicative nature of experience is not usually stressed in discussion of construct theory (Bannister and Fransella 1971) but clearly if experience were not replicative there could be no basis for differentiation. The idea that our experience is determined by our attention to its replicative features, is similar to Hume's philosophy of critical skepticism. In the context of



argument it is important because the replicative nature of experience forms the basis for the understanding of rationality and consistency within Personal Construct Theory.

An individual's construct system is therefore a way of representing experience to himself, of making sense of the world. What counts as experience for each individual is defined by his construct system. Each individual comes to construct for himself a characteristic 'view of the world'. This assumptive world (Young 1977), forms the basis of the individual's definition and interpretation of particular events (Eden and Sims 1979).

The discussion on subjective thinking, so far, is intended to suggest that the intelligibility of argument depends crucially upon having access to individuals' idiosyncratic interpretations of the event, which will include that individual as both a valuing and a reasoning entity. Personal Construct Theory offers some facility for being able to do this; in particular construct theory offers a new framework for understanding the nature of rationality, and it is the construction of this framework which forms the final part of this chapter.

The discussion of reasoning as a strictly logical activity, to reasoning as a personal and idiosyncratic process, has built up gradually a different picture of man from that of rational man described earlier. This is important with respect to argument, since it suggests that an understanding of argument will require access to both the reasoning and the valuing aspects of each individual. Before completing the model suggested by construct theory, this is an appropriate point to look more carefully at a definition of argument

for this thesis.

### Definitions of argument

The introduction provided a brief guideline on what may be taken to be argument, it was suggested that:

"Argument is an attempt to persuade others to a point of view or course of action by a set of linked propositions, through the use of language"

This implies certain assumptions about the nature of the events which are tackled in this thesis, namely:

- a) The argument occurs primarily as an oral or written interaction.
- b) The arguers' primary intention is to persuade others.
- c) The arguer expects to persuade others through their adoption or partial adoption of his arguments.

In summary the arguer is making some claim for the attention and belief of others (Toulmin 1958). This will exclude from consideration arguments which are presented for reasons other than the above. For example, attempts to filibuster, or interrupt an interaction for other purposes.

But more widely than this, an argument of this sort conceptually represents an interaction between two (or more) interpretations of experience. Reardon describes the task of persuasive argument as:

"persons assist each other in the shaping of their private and shared versions of reality"

(Reardon 1981)

This is very different from the view taken by Bell and Staines who

wish to enable students of argument to:

"analyse and evaluate sophisticated scientific argument"  
(Bell and Staines 1979)

The quote from Fisher earlier in this chapter emphasized in relation to argument a familiar dichotomy of approach between argument as a rational activity, concerned with objective (public) criteria, and argument as a social event, concerned with the communication of individual values. Such a split is reflected in the literature on argument which divides between persuasion theorists and argumentation research. Argumentation research has been concerned with matters of logic, jurisprudence and forensic science. Persuasion theory has tackled issues of attitude change, communication, and attribution theory, and is more concerned with issues of social psychology (Fisher and Sayles 1966, Miller and Nilsen 1966, Crable 1976, Orr 1978).

Reflection on the experience of argument suggests that neither of these approaches adequately characterizes the nature of the experience, in a way which would enable an arguer to gain some predictive ability and hence control over the experience. Emphasis on the individual interpretation of argument is not really able to explain the powerful and compulsive influence of rational/logical inputs to debate. The idea of rational logical argument can make little contribution to arguments which rest in part on personal values.

At the root of discussion about argument is the experience of being in an argument. Any argument occurs in a particular context, and is just

one part of a complex social event, only one outcome of which is the gaining the interest and perhaps acceptance of the ideas contained in the argument. It is an event in which personal relationships, power, individual style, presentation, may all be relevant to understanding 'what is going on'. Indeed that there is 'something going on' that each participant can agree that 'it is going on' is seriously problematic (Sims 1979).

The experience of argument forms the fundamental base for data, yet experience is necessarily mediated through individuals' expectations and interpretations of the event in which they are participating. In placing an existential emphasis on the way in which we come to understand the nature of argument, it is possible to proceed in two ways; through a phenomenological process of concentrating on the phenomena, and also in a more metaphysical style by asking what conditions need to be fulfilled in order to have 'such and such' an experience, and represent it to ourselves in a particular manner. This section has broached an understanding of argument as part of a wider context of interpreting and understanding experience, and representing that experience to others as a set of reasoned propositions. This framework is fully developed in the following section using the theory of personal constructs.

#### A framework for the study of argument

The views of argument as a rational process, or as a way of individuals communicating values, carry with them implications about the nature of human interaction. Consider two opposing argumentative interactions.

A common strategy in argument is an appeal to the facts:

"you've got to look at the facts....."

Whatever else it is this strategy is strongly pre-emptive, since in setting the argument in a rational, objective framework (or attempting to do so), it limits socially the argument strategies available to opponents.

In this context an attempt to argue that

"it all depends on what you mean by the facts..."

which may be an attempt to dispute the framework, is made to look like a dispute within the objective framework as to the nature of the facts.

A similarly pre-emptive argument occurs when in an argument someone claims:

"It may be irrational but that's how I feel"

In this context any attempt to move the discussion into an objective framework may now be socially excluded.

The process of argument depends crucially therefore on the individual frameworks erected by the arguer and audience, but these frameworks have to be built against a wider normative framework of social expectation which underlies the setting for any argument. By its very nature argument is an intersubjective activity, it is concerned with the interaction of subjective worlds. Personal Construct Theory,

which was introduced in an earlier section through the fundamental postulate of the theory, is primarily a theory about subjective worlds. Two further statements of the theory tackle issues of intersubjectivity, they are the Commonality corollary and the Sociality corollary, which are:

"To the extent that one person employs a construction of experience similar to that employed by another, his or her processes are psychologically similar to those of the other person"

(Commonality corollary)

"To the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another, he or she may play a role in a social process involving the other person"

(Sociality corollary)

These corollaries give two distinct meanings to intersubjectivity. The commonality statement is concerned with 'having the same experience as someone else', in which case those portions of the individual subjective worlds which relate to that experience are the same (or similar). This is a way of defining objective knowledge (and all that such a notion entails) in terms of its psychological effects. For instance, objective knowledge might be defined as that knowledge on which we employ constructions similar to those of other people, and moreover are constructions which are relatively stable over time. Any rule, such as a rule of logical reasoning, can be seen to act as a means of ensuring that psychological constructions within the context delimited by the rule have a feature of commonality. Intersubjective commonality can thus be seen to be a way of explaining many of the features of the rational aspects of argument.

However, intersubjectivity may also arise through understanding a part of another's subjective world, but not accepting it as one's own. This is represented through the Sociality corollary which defines the subjectivity of others' in terms of one's own subjectivity. The private and value oriented aspects of argument are contained within this notion of sociality. It suggests that it is possible to understand the nature of values which the individual does not himself hold. This sort of intersubjectivity is described by Eden, Jones, Sims and Smithin (1981) as:

"It may be that members of the team find it useful to have a deeper awareness of their colleagues views, and a richer view of the team, and this additional understanding leads to changes in the way the team operates which are beneficial in the longer term."

Argument is therefore also concerned with processes of intersubjective sociality.

As Kelly suggests the notion of commonality is concerned with the influence that culture or social expectations may have on the individuals' interpretation of experience. In the context of argument this notion of culture is widened to include experiences which are more usually referred to as facts, objective knowledge, and certainty. The plausability of an argument to an individual is thereby influenced within these terms by the way in which the individual relates the argument and his subjective world; this is not a simple matter of listening and evaluating since the argument that is 'heard' is mediated through the individual's construct system.

From the viewpoint of an individual listening to an argument, his

knowledge within his subjective world is characterized by his belief in the commonality of that knowledge with others. In other words he can construe others' construing and in so doing gains some measure of what he judges to be commonality between his own construing and that of others. Knowledge and processes which are often described as objective or rational seem to have a characteristic within this construing process that individuals construe them to be knowledge or processes that everyone (including themselves) construes in a similar way. For instance, beliefs about physical objects such as, 'this is a table', are usually of this nature. If an individual were to meet someone whose construing of this experience was very different it would be difficult for him to play any part in a social role with that individual. A common response might be to reconstrue the event as one in which 'the person is trying to illustrate some philosophical point', rather than to change the interpretation of 'this is a table'. The tensions produced for individuals who are artificially placed in an environment where such beliefs are open to doubt (Asch 1955) are considerable and illustrate the compulsion of such beliefs.

In contrast beliefs which are construed as applying to groups of people, rather than everyone, have a different characteristic. For example 'nationalisation is a good thing'. Here it is possible for individuals to play some social role in respect of someone who does not hold this belief, although again in extreme cases (eg: an argument between an atheist and a devoutly religious person about the existence of God) no sociality is possible (Trigg 1973).

Thirdly beliefs which are construed as being common to very few people



provide a different basis for interaction, since a necessary part of conveying those beliefs to others must concern establishing a basis for understanding in terms of other commonalities between belief systems.

Analysis of subjective worlds thus begins to provide a framework which encompasses argument between individuals whether it is formed as a rational process or as a personal, valuing one. The following factors are therefore relevant in analysing argument within this framework:

- a) To what extent do the arguer and audience play a social role in respect to each other?
- b) What commonality do arguer and audience perceive between their construing of the argument event (both as to the nature of the event, and the substantive content of the argument)?
- c) To what extent do arguer and audience perceive their construing of an event to be supported by others?

The effect of these factors on the persuasive appeal of the argument can be separated and discussed, but they may not be linear or additive. The methods for representing and gaining access to individual argument are developed and discussed in the next chapter.

## Summary of Chapter 1

### Reasoning and valuing

This chapter proposed that the study of argument as a means of persuading others is a neglected feature of organizational life. Yet individuals do apparently spend significant time and energy on the preparation of arguments which are intended to persuade others. Perhaps this neglect is partly due to the theoretical difficulties that a study of argument as a practical activity presents, since it is both a social interaction, and is also frequently described as an objective and rational activity. It was argued that the framework which presents argument as a primarily rational activity which can be studied objectively, is not able to adequately explain an actual argument between individuals. A 'rational' framework excludes from consideration the personal and idiosyncratic interpretations of the event, which define 'the event' for each participant, and thus rob the framework of much of its explanatory power. The basic model chosen for studying argument is therefore one which focusses upon individual interpretation of experience, and has a subjective model of man at its centre.

Nonetheless the rational and logical aspects of argument cannot be ignored, and have to be explained rather than eschewed within this model. Indeed they are critical to an understanding of the importance for persuading others of 'having a good case'. For example, the exploration of the appeal of rationality suggests that there is both a strong ethical appeal to argue in a particular way, and an appeal of obtaining knowledge which is 'as certain as anything can be'. Such appeals are reflected in the various studies of argument, and in

the more everyday comments that people make about argument. If there is as Thorndike put it, 'something about having a good case', then what is it, and how can it be included within an essentially subjective model of man (Thorndike 1931).

The gulf that exists between persuasion theorists and argumentation studies is illustrative of the conceptual difficulties of studying argument, and emphasizes the need for a model of man as an arguer which describes man both as a reasoning and as a valuing animal.

The discussion of different models of thinking, varying from thinking as an essentially logical activity to subjective theories of thinking leads to Kelly's theory of personal constructs. In this theory man as a rational and detached scientist is replaced by man the scientist who is an inveterate inquirer into his own experience. Each individual places an interpretation on events in order to make sense of his experience, to predict and control events. This for Kelly is the essence of human activity, it is a process of 'striving towards' and it is the metaphor of man which underlies the study of argument in this thesis.

Two corollaries of Kelly's theory provide a framework for combining the rational and logical aspects of argument with the social and political aspects of argument. The sociality corollary is concerned with individual's ability to understand others' interpretations of experience. To the extent that individuals can play a social role with respect to each other then persuasive argument is possible between them. In an extreme instance where individuals cannot make sense of (that is are not able to empathize with) another view of the

world then their arguments are not credible to each other. The sociality corollary is thus concerned with many of the individual and idiosyncratic aspects of argument. The commonality corollary is concerned with the extent to which individuals interpret experience in a similar way. Similarity of interpretation leads to a reservoir of shared and agreed experience, and thus forms the basis for understanding the aspects of argument common to all, that is, the rational and logical features of argument. The theory of personal constructs thus offers an essentially subjective model of man, but is potentially able to account for aspects of experience which are more often thought of in terms of rationality.

A complete definition of what is meant by argument in the context of this thesis is not attempted because argument as an entity in its own right cannot be entirely separated from the 'event' in which it occurs. This chapter attempted only to define the features of events which make the activity of using linked propositions to persuade others a significant one, and this is the working definition of argument used throughout this thesis.

## CHAPTER 2

### REPRESENTING ARGUMENT

#### Introduction

In this chapter the nature of thinking is further explored in relation to methods of capturing and representing individual cognitive systems. The technique and ideas of cognitive mapping are described in relation to other methods, using an example set of data based on the field work of Chapter 3. The use of cognitive mapping in exploring and analysing argument is discussed. Finally some more general methodological issues are examined in relation to obtaining authentic data about individual argument and the conclusions which may be reasonably drawn from such an exercise.

#### The nature of thinking

In Chapter 1 various models of thinking were described in terms of the psychological theories that they represented. Much of the discussion on the nature of thinking revolves around the link between logic and psychology, of which the discussion of the influence of rationality on debate is a part. Views on this link range from the notion that logical laws exist prior to experience, usually referred to a 'logicism', to the view that the laws of logic derive from experience, often called 'psychologism'. A discussion of the history of these ideas is given for example by Bolton (1972). A relevant issue for the study of argumentation in this debate is raised by the work of Husserl (1911) Husserl reflects an important concern with the psychological experience of logical relations. Like Descartes, in a rather different context, Husserl was intrigued by the vivid and

compelling quality of experience that logical laws produced. The feeling of being certain was compulsive and powerful and seemed less under psychological control than other experiences. It is interesting though that Husserl turned not to the objects which might produce this experience, but to the mind which was experiencing these compelling phenomena as the key to his inquiry. The work of this thesis faces a similar issue, in that argument is also concerned with psychological compulsion or more generally the effect of argument on thinking (Churchill and Ameriks 1973, Edie 1976). The key to this inquiry is the individual experience of 'being persuaded'. Chapter 1 has argued that a suitable theory of argument must include aspects of argument as a social phenomenon and must be able to encompass our experience of logical relations if it is to be of use in explaining argument.

The need for a subjective view arises primarily from a pragmatic need to deal with the experiential nature of thinking in, for example, an organizational setting, since as Richards (1929) suggests it is with this realm of opinion and dispute rather than facts and laws that civilized man is most concerned. In view of this need a method of representing argument will require a theory of cognition and its description which is able to cope with individual cognitive systems.

#### Representing cognitive systems

The philosopher John Dewey has had considerable influence on researchers' conceptions of thinking as a practical activity. His identification of thinking with problem solving remains at the core of many approaches to the study of cognition, including those of

Piaget and Kelly. In this context the term problem solving has wider connotations than its more restricted use in the field of experimental psychology. For Dewey problem solving expressed a fundamental human activity of making choices, judging, and assessing actions in respect of an external world (Dewey 1910, 1925). Thinking arises in response to some problem confronting the individual, or which he perceives as confronting him, and in which he needs to make some sort of assessment and choice. That choice may be carried out through some kind of mental or actual simulation of the consequences of that choice (Sims 1979). The utility of thinking arises from its symbolic nature, in that the assessment may be carried out through the means of symbols rather than as a physical operation. This is its distinctive characteristic. The purpose of thinking as envisaged by Dewey was to provide the individual with a potential means of controlling his environment. That control develops through the individual being able to construct mental models of his world. If this control is to be effective however then these symbolic operations must be testable for their adequacy in controlling the environment. 'Reality testing' is a significant part of thinking. The nature of the 'reality' against which this testing occurs is nonetheless extremely problematic, as Chapter 1 suggested, and reality in this context is more adequately characterised as an individual interpretation of reality only part of which may be in any way 'held in common' with others, or be in touch with the physical world. It is clear too that the testing and judgement of the match between mental model and perceived reality is influenced by the nature of the mental model itself. The often quoted aphorism of

Thomas and Thomas sums up the nature of this 'reality testing' quite well:

"If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

(Thomas and Thomas 1928)

Men's freedom in this regard is not universal since those who are at some variance with the 'commonly held world', both of social norms and physical laws, face considerable challenges in terms of biological and social survival. The early work of Freud (1887) placed considerable emphasis on the development of the cognitive system through its relation to reality, or more precisely, a perceived external world. The mind develops from a concern with what Freud called primary processes, in which instinctual wishes seek immediate satisfaction, to an increasing concern with the external world in which secondary processes of repression and deferment of wish fulfilment occur. With a distinctly materialist conception of nature Freud suggested that the pressure for this kind of development, and hence for the development of thinking (as represented by the ego) was primarily that of biological survival. Thinking is inevitably a controlling process. Freud for example saw the ego as the mechanism by which instinctual life and the external world could be brought into some kind of dynamic equilibrium (Strachey 1973).

The work of Piaget similarly stresses the development of a cognitive system which enables the individual to become increasingly adapted to his environment (Piaget 1954). The development of intelligence for the child begins with an infant exploring his world in a physical way and building up a rudimentary cognitive system through the



co-ordination of his actions. For example, a child by finding that one pebble is heavier than another discovers a physical relation in the world. By discovering that the number 5 remains whether he counts from right or left of a row of pebbles, he uncovers a mathematical or more abstract relation in the world. The system is developing through the abstraction of experience.

Both Freud and Piaget who are rarely associated through their work, have a conception of cognitive systems in which the development of thinking arises primarily as a way of controlling the individual's relation to his environment, and in part the nature of that environment. 'Predict and survive' might be a motto that each would have accepted. The work of Kelly, introduced in Chapter 1, similarly views man as behaving in this way. Man is a scientist theorizing about the world, and continually testing those theories for their adequacy. When viewed in the context of the work of Dewey, Freud, and especially Piaget, the work of Kelly is not as isolated as is sometimes presented (Bannister 1977). The principal difference between Piaget and Kelly is that whereas Piaget was concerned with the development of the cognitive system (cognitive structures as he termed it), Kelly is concerned with describing those structures and their subsequent development in the mature individual. The processes of development, however, through the replication of events and abstraction, closely mirror those of Piaget. The influence of a developed cognitive system on its own future development is massive, the interaction with the physical world of the senses less relevant. Thinking for the mature individual is significantly channelled. Thus Kelly more than any other worker stresses the individuality of each

cognitive system, and the variety of systems which have developed to enable individuals to cope with their environment.

This conception of a cognitive system and its purpose determines to some extent the way in which cognition is described, and represented, and the features which are signalled as worthy of attention. Before tackling the issues and nature of the description, it is important to tackle one aspect of the partial nature of this description, namely the emphasis on conscious, cognitive elements of thinking. This also emphasizes that in discussing argument this thesis is focussed upon the cognitive and language based aspects of persuasive argument.

#### Non-language based aspects of cognition and argument

The symbolic rather than physical nature of thinking raises the issue of the nature of those symbols and consequently the relation of thinking to language (Greene 1975, Searle 1978). For the purposes of this thesis it is adequate to propose a fairly transparent relation between the two, because argument is so dependant on language as the ostensible means of persuading. These issues are not however trivial in regard to assessing the status of the models of argument that are constructed and used. For example, Personal Construct Theory discusses the issue of non-verbal expression, which means that constructs may carry less definable meanings. Yet these aspects are intrinsically difficult to make explicit, and may anyway be fundamentally changed if they became explicit since explicitness implies expression by language. In the work mentioned earlier Eden, Jones and Sims (1979) reported considerable difficulty in identifying individual's values with particular verbal labels, or even groups of

labels. Given the nature of values their expression as an explicit verbal statement may be only a partial representation of a particular value or goal. It may be possible to link a group of concepts together under the heading 'these are to do with a particular value', but it may not be possible to make that value explicit.

The description of thinking as a language based structure, and a number of such schemes are described below, is therefore a partial activity, and the interpretation of such structures in relation to the mental life of the individual is fraught with problems, some of which are reflected in the discussion of methodology at the end of this chapter. In this thesis such structures are to be taken as useful representations of thinking which can provide insight into those aspects of thinking (in relation to argument) which are language based, and can give some information on the individual's interpretation of his world. They are social products not mental entities. That there may be some link between the social product and the mental life of an individual is likely given the utility of the social product. But a cognitive map is primarily a representation of thinking, not a model of the mind.

#### Cognitive mapping as a representation of argument

The technique of cognitive mapping, as described here, was developed at the University of Bath by Colin Eden and others (Eden, Smithin and Wiltshire 1980) as an operational means of representing individual construct systems. Cognitive mapping is rather different from the other techniques, such as repertory grids, which emanate from construct theory. Repertory grids more generally elicit constructs

from elements and do not provide the explanatory links between constructs (Fransella and Bannister 1977). Apart from the particular advantages of using cognitive mapping for describing argument which are discussed in the following passage, it was selected as a method because of the close links with Personal Construct Theory.

Nonetheless it is only one possible way of describing argument, and others (based on other theories of cognition), are briefly described to show other, quite similar, possibilities. It is the intention of this thesis to suggest that some of the aspects of cognitive mapping are useful in representing argument, but the general arguments of the thesis rest on Personal Construct Theory not on a particular method.

At this stage it is assumed that it is possible to get to know about others' thinking in a reliable and authentic manner. A discussion of this issue of methodology is discussed in a later section. The examples used are taken from an analysis of the Diaries of Richard Crossman as a Labour Minister of Housing 1964-66 and concern a planning decision at Hartley in Kent (Crossman 1975). These data form the basis for Chapter 3 and are discussed in detail there. Here they are used to illustrate more generally the principles of a cognitive map and some possible forms of analysis in relation to the study of argument.

Personal Construct Theory suggests (Chapter 1) that the basic building blocks of a cognitive system are constructs. Constructs arise through the replication of events by an individual and are his abstraction from those events of a particular property that he sees in those events which may be applied to other events. The extent to which a construct may be applied to other events depends upon its range of

convenience. Each construct may therefore cover a variety of other events, and to the extent that a construct is itself an event, constructs may subsume other constructs. The construct system is thus a hierarchical system, and thinking and analysis may occur at different levels of the hierarchy. A construct has a rather different property to a concept as the latter is normally described (Cohen 1977). A construct arises from a contrast or differentiation between events, and is that feature or property seen in those events that distinguish them in some way from each other. A cognitive map is concerned with constructs which are of an operational rather than a conceptual nature, and relate therefore to specific issues. One construct for Crossman in relation to the planning decision was identified as:

Green belt not inviolate .... Green belt inviolate

The 'Green belt not inviolate' part (or pole) of the construct was placed first as this seemed to be Crossman's own viewpoint and the one that he explicitly expressed. The second pole represents his envisaged alternative to 'Green belt not inviolate' in this context.

The notion of the envisaged alternative or contrast is helpful in understanding the meaning of a statement in a particular context, it gives some idea of the movement that the individual sees as possible. It represents, in terms of construct theory, an explicit expression of the channel for this particular part of the individual's mental model. For example in another document (earlier) on Green Belt the phrase 'green belt not inviolate' was used, but in contrast with the phrase 'non green belt land' This suggests a construct of:

Non green belt land .... green belt inviolate

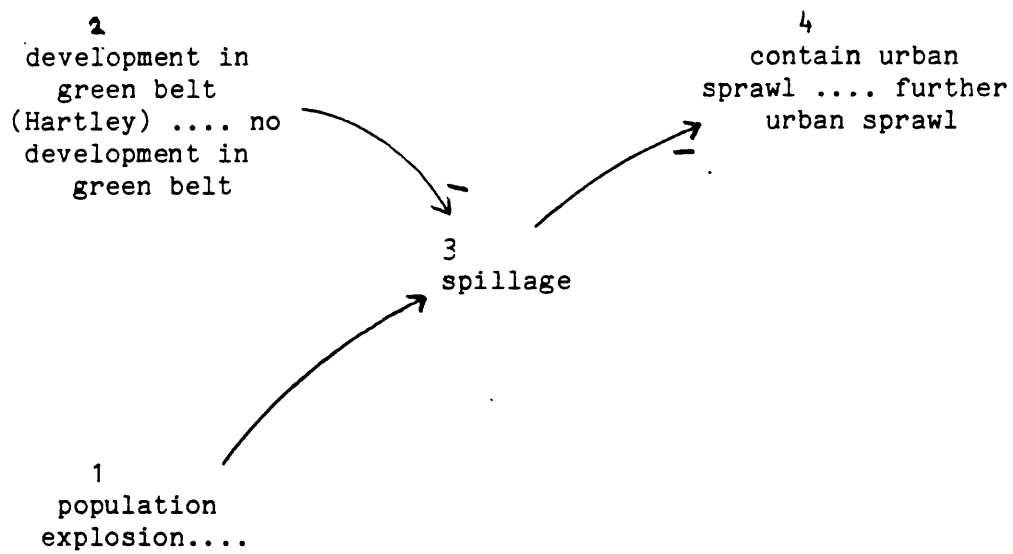
This suggests different possibilities. For example, a planner who wished to argue for a particular development on green belt land, would be helped in choosing his strategy by knowledge of these envisaged alternatives. In the above simple case the two different constructs suggest different lines of argument that may be persuasive. The second construct implies no conception of building on green belt land, land is either 'inviolate green belt', or 'non green belt land'. The first construct envisages this possibility. When arguing against the second construct strategies involving re-designation of the land might be more effective, but when arguing against the first construct, argument about building on green belt in exceptional circumstances may be fruitful. If there were only two constructs then an extrapolation of this sort would not be very soundly based, but it provides an example of the way in which the contrasting nature of constructs gives clues to the world, as that individual may see it, and consequently to the arguments which will need to be addressed when attempting to persuade him to a course of action. Many constructs however, do not have a contrast explicitly stated, this may be because of a number of features of the event. For instance, the contrast may be implied but not expressed, or the 'logical' or obvious opposite may convey the meaning intended. An equally useful clue to meaning is the relation of the construct to other constructs directly affecting it in an associative or causal manner. Causal chains of constructs are the basic way of representing argument within a cognitive map. Various comparisons of chains of linked

constructs offer the main mechanism of describing and comparing arguments. (Note that the term construct and concept are used interchangeably in the later chapters of this thesis). The following example represents as a cognitive map (codes) of a brief section of the Crossman Diary.

"one just had to have [developments] like this in the green belt to deal with the population explosion... and prevent it spilling further and creating even further urban sprawl..."

This could be represented as a cognitive map as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1      A small cognitive map





A link between two constructs represents that the first pole of the one construct leads to or affects in some way the first pole of the other construct. It also implies the complementary relation that the second pole of the first construct leads to the second pole of the other construct. For example, in the map above this implies that 'development in green belt' leads to 'decrease spillage' which leads to 'contain urban sprawl'. It also implies the 'opposite argument' that: 'no development in green belt' leads to 'spillage' which leads to 'further urban sprawl'.

Not building on green belt is not according to the original statement the sole cause of spillage, clearly without a population explosion the issue would not arise. So 'population explosion' leads to 'spillage'. Each set of links on the map represents part of an argument and is the support that would be used to put forward the case. In this case it is the two chains with starting points of 'population explosion' and 'development in green belt' that jointly lead to the outcome (in this case urban sprawl).

There may be instances where the poles are oppositely linked to that described above. That is, the first pole of one concept leads to the second pole of another. This is indicated by a minus (negative) sign. There is no significance in the use of negative links other than this. A general guide to the technique can be found in Smithin (1982). In interpreting the cognitive maps and lists of constructs given in this thesis the following points may be helpful.

Concepts consist of two contrasting poles (not all the poles are made explicit). Concepts are linked by an arrow indicating that one

concept affects another in some way. Phrases or concepts which are in some way linked to a concept but not causally, are connected by a straight line (connotative link). Concepts are shown as bi-polar or as a single pole followed by ellipsis (dots). Concepts not shown in this way (or with [+] and [-] preceeding the text) are monotonic concepts, and should be interpreted as having implied poles of, 'an increase in .... a decrease in' (see 'spillage' in the above example).

#### Computer aid and Cognitive mapping

As the examples in chapter 3 show, any argument worth the energy and attention of busy individuals is much more complex than the simple example discussed above, and can typically consist of 100-200 concepts and 200-300 links. At this stage the use of computer software to manipulate and store data can be a considerable advantage. In this thesis use has been made of a software package called COPE, which is designed to assist with the manipulation and exploration of cognitive maps. There are also available within the package various methods of analysing a cognitive map, and these are used at various points in the thesis. A full discussion of these features is provided in the context of their use in later chapters. Generally speaking the software package is used as a transparent tool in the study of cognitive maps. This means that its function is to allow the user to perform tasks whose principles are determined from the theory of cognitive mapping, and which could in principle be achieved without the aid of the software. Figure 2.2 shows the output from the computer package of the arguments on the map in Figure 2.1. Figure 2.3 shows how the cognitive map was entered as a computer model. A general description of the package and commands available

can be found in the COPE User Guide and Reference Manual (COPE 1983). In this thesis the package is generally regarded as a tool (like a pencil) and so the technicalities of its use are not discussed. An overview of the use of COPE can be found in Hewitt and Smithin (1981). Full discussion is given on the relevant theories of cognitive mapping where these are used, either manually or in conjunction with the computer package, at the appropriate points in the thesis. Note that in general computer output has been re-typed on a conventional typewriter, or re-drawn from the computer output where a cognitive map is involved, so that the presentation is consistent and clear.

The cognitive map is a representation of part of the thinking and argument that an individual expresses which partly describe the ways in which he has come to make sense of experience.

Figure 2.2

Text output of the cognitive map of figure 2.1  
 From the COPE computer package

---

Demonstration of COPE

---

Consequences

- +1     population explosion  
          may lead to
- +3     ... an increase in spillage  
          which can lead to
- 4     further urban sprawl

Consequences

- +2     development in green belt (Hartley)  
          may lead to
- 3     ... a decrease in spillage  
          which can lead to
- +4     contain urban sprawl

Consequences

- 2     no development in green belt  
          may lead to
- +3     ... an increase in spillage  
          which can lead to
- 4     further urban sprawl

Figure 2.3      Entering data to the COPE computer package

use demo  
Creating new model DEMO

UNDERLINED = Entered command

Model DEMO

=====

t1=Demonstration of COPE

t2=-----

t3=

1=population explosion.

2=development in green belt (Hartley). no development in green belt

3=spillage

4=contain urban sprawl.further urban sprawl

1+3

2-3

3-4

1

```

1  population explosion . . . . .[not]population explosion
2  development in green belt (Hartley) . . . . no development in green belt
3  [+]spillage . . . . . [-]spillage
4  contain urban sprawl . . . . . further urban sprawl

```

1r

1      +3

2      -3

3      -4

c1

----- Consequences -----

```

+1    population explosion
      may lead to
+3    ... an increase in spillage
      which can lead to
-4    further urban sprawl

```

bye

End of model DEMO

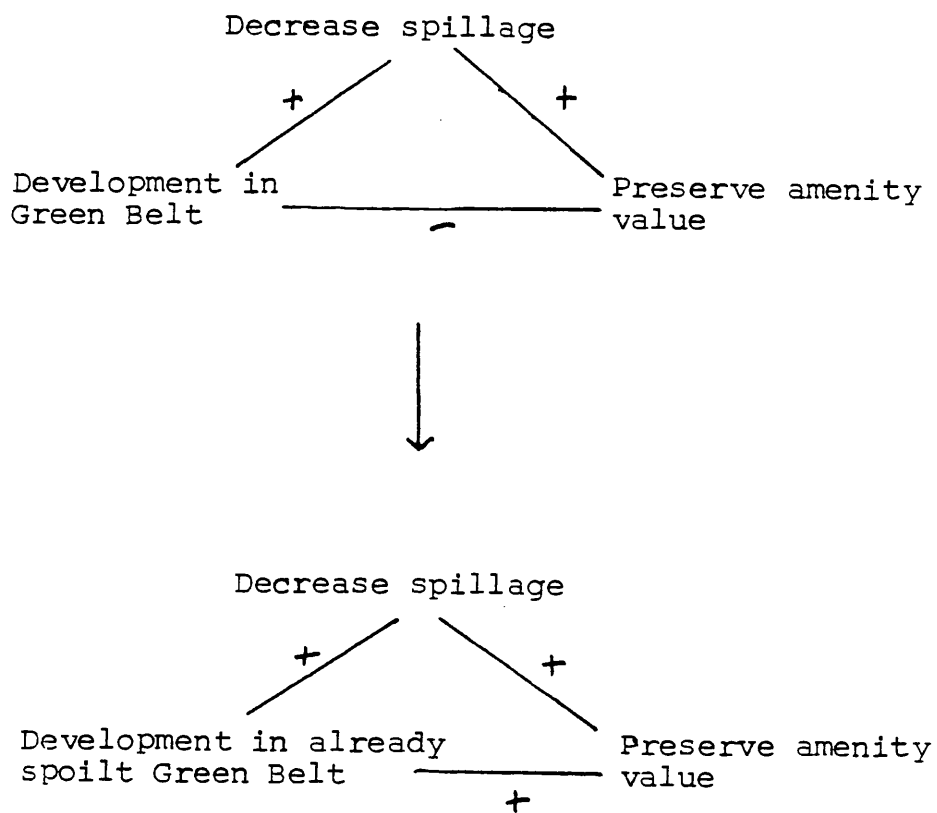
### Some models of thinking compared

So far in this chapter it has been suggested that a distinctive feature of thinking, especially in relation to argument is its implicative, structural and predictive nature. To illustrate this, and set the technique of cognitive mapping in a wider context, the argument set forth in the above section is recast in the form of two alternative models (balance theory and argumentation analysis). This also assists in identifying some useful features of cognitive mapping in respect of representing argument.

#### (1) Balance theory

Balance theory, originally introduced by Heider (1944) and further elaborated by Osgood and Tannebaum (1955) proposed that an individual's cognitive structure could be analysed in terms of the relations between triads of cognitive elements which are connected in an affective relationship. Some possible triads are shown in Figure 2.4. The plus sign indicates a positive affective relation, which in this example might be termed a compatibility between the elements, and the minus sign an incompatibility. So for example, 'decrease spillage' is compatible with 'development in green belt'. When considered in isolation there is no incompatibility between 'decrease spillage' and 'preserve amenity value'. It is only in relation to the third element, when these cognitive elements are brought into relation with each other, that an incompatibility arises between 'development in green belt' and 'preserve amenity value'.

Figure 2.4 Balance theory representation of sample data



This in balance theory represents an imbalance or strain in the cognitive structure. It is a disjunction which creates a pressure to be resolved into a more balanced state. That resolution can come about through a change in the relation between the elements, or through a change in the elements themselves.

"If no balanced state exists, then forces towards this state will arise. Either the dynamic characters will change, or the unit relations will be changed through action or through cognitive reorganizaion. If a change is not possible, the state of imbalance will produce tension."

(Heider 1946)

One possible resolution, which is in effect the predictive nature of this model is shown in Figure 2.4. The predictive value of the theory lies in the construction of triads, the recognition of potential conflict, and the suggestions of new compatible structures which the original structures may be transformed into. Note that there is an element of channelling in this theory too in that there are only certain ways, given the original structures, in which changes may occur. It is also an individually oriented theory, in that the links between the elements can be specific to an individual, although the theory is not always presented in this way. This theory has rarely been used in complex decision making, and has tended to be used to study the preferences of large numbers of subjects over a small field of elements. This theory of cognitive balance and the related work of cognitive dissonance, both emphasize the role of mental models for 'making sense' of the world, and have suggested ways of analysing those structures in terms of explaining and predicting behaviour.

One disadvantage of these theories, apart from their lack of exposure



to complex situations, is that the causal links between the elements of the triads are not made explicit. In terms of representing argument this leaves out of account the way in which ideas are linked in a supportive sequence. Whilst this can sometimes be inferred from the elements this is not always the case. Whilst the language of the elements can remain close to that used originally, some difficulty was experienced in structuring the data in the form of triads. This imposes an additional constraint on the modelling process, and potentially makes it less transparent to the user and modeller. Transparency refers to the ability of the model to represent what it is modelling in a way which makes the transition between the original data and the model quite clear. It can help to make use of the technique for 'lay' users much simpler. For the researcher it assists checking on the relationship between the model and data, and can help to ensure that research conclusions are properly grounded (Glaser and Straus 1967).

## (2) Argumentation studies

In contrast to balance theory, argumentation studies do describe the causal or supportive structure of arguments, but there is no clearly elaborated underlying model of cognitive change and development. So the theories do not provide a predictive model of man (Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik 1979). This argument is sketched below in terms of a more traditional argumentation study (Bell and Staines 1979). The unit of analysis in this case is a statement. Statements are categorized in terms of the function that they perform in the overall argument. The claim is the objective or goal of the argument, which the other statements are attempting to prove or support. In this case

it might be:

no more urban sprawl

Another category is that of the grounds for the claim, these are usually the given elements of the situation, eg: facts, events, common beliefs. A warrant is the rule or belief which links the grounds to the claim. So the general form of the argument might be:

It is agreed that G(grounds) has happened, now when G happens this leads to C (warrant). Hence C is true (claim).

In this case it might be analysed as:

There is a population explosion (G). A population explosion will lead to spillage (W). Development on green belt will prevent spillage. Hence, contain urban sprawl (C).

Again in argument analysis, as with balance theory and cognitive mapping, there is an emphasis on the elements of the argument and the links between them. Clearly a decision to examine the grounds rather than the warrant will lead to a different argument strategy. In the one case disputing the facts eg: is there really a population explosion, and in the other disputing the links between grounds and claim; will the population explosion lead inevitably to spillage. As Toulmin emphasizes the strategy is partly determined by the context of the argument (Toulmin 1958). For example an argument in ethics may be tackled very differently from an argument in science, especially in regard to the status given to different features of the argument.

In addition to the difficulties mentioned above, the location of this work within a broadly rational model of man makes it unsuited to the

task of this thesis, also like balance theory it does not seem to have been applied to practical argument settings. However the basic mechanism of representation of argument is not that dissimilar from that of cognitive mapping. Also the choice of the statement as a unit of analysis ignores contrasts and thus may not reveal some of the meaning of the statements. There is also in practice a greater emphasis on reduction, and the consideration of the elements in isolation from each other, although this does not seem to be a necessary feature of the approach.

The purpose of these comparisons is two-fold. It illustrates the point that the use of construct theory, and cognitive mapping, is not very different to the way in which argument is often analysed, but there are some specific advantages in using a cognitive map.

- a) The use of constructs and the notion of contrast, provides important information on the meaning intended by the arguer, and on the possible channels for change that he envisages in the situation. So for example the use by Crossman of the contrasting pole of 'green belt not inviolate ..... green belt inviolate' gives information on what 'green belt' means to Crossman.
- b) The cognitive map is a more flexible representation, and directly expresses causal links between constructs, and thus explicitly represents chains of argument. See for example Figure 2.1.
- c) Through the use of associated computer software the cognitive map provides access to a greater degree of complexity in argument than might otherwise be possible. This is shown for example in Chapter 3 where the combined model of Crossman's arguments could not be easily explored or analysed manually, because of the number of concepts and the complexity of the links between them.

Finally it is interesting to note that all these models have in common a view of thinking as a propositional 'if then' type of activity, which enables individuals to make sense of their environment and act

within it.

### Modality and certainty

In the above description of three ways of representing an argument, the certainty with which an argument is put forward (modality) was not discussed. Yet as Toulmin emphasizes the nature of the modal qualifiers is an important determinant of the effect of the argument. In the above examples it is respectively to do with, the strength of the link between concepts, the strength of the incompatibility between two cognitive elements, and the certainty which can be ascribed to the warrant (Toulmin 1958).

Toulmin illustrates the effect of modal qualifiers and the psychological reactions that they produce with the following example:

Consider two arguments using the modal qualifier cannot:

- 1) You cannot lift that two ton weight
- 2) You cannot speak of a fox's tail

In the first example we feel that the modal qualifier 'cannot' is more appropriately or strongly used, since it refers to physical impossibility, that is, you certainly cannot. Whereas in the second example it is actually possible to talk of a fox's tail rather than the brush, even if it is not done at the Hunt Ball. The second example is more in the nature of a terminological impropriety.

But in addition the appropriateness of a modal qualifier depends upon the context in which it is used. This thesis provides an example of this. As its subject matter is broadly speaking that of social science, there is a predominance of subdued qualifiers in the

presentation of theories. The use of 'most', and 'generally', and 'broadly', as opposed to 'all', 'always' and so on. This has both a tactical and conceptual implication. The tactical implication is that the use of 'all' includes the reader, so that it is always possible to induce the response 'but that's not true of me', or at least points the reader straightaway to think of exceptions. The use of 'most' in the same context, conversely leaves the reader free to include himself or not as he wishes, and points towards the commonality of the example. So for instance a statement like:

'Most people are discomfited by someone pointing out a logical flaw in their argument'

Is received very differently from the statement

'All people are discomfited by someone pointing out a logical flaw in their argument'

The only difference between these statements is the modal qualifier.

Consider however a statement in a scientific context:

'Most electrons carry a negative charge'

compared with:

'All electrons carry a negative charge'

Here the acceptability of the arguments is reversed. This is the conceptual point of modality. Our understanding of the effect and use of qualifiers relates closely to the beliefs we hold in common with others about the nature of the world, and the type of knowledge that we believe is attainable in a given context. Modal qualifiers are therefore closely related to the notion of the commonality between

construct systems. It is this commonality which enables us to judge the use of qualifiers in a given context. Qualifiers are also concerned with the range of convenience of a given construct, social constructs may not apply to all people, but scientific constructs must have as wide a range of convenience as possible, as that is one of the agreed criteria for the adequacy of a scientific proposition. More generally Kahneman and Tversky (1982) have pointed to recent research on choice and probability in decision making that suggests people are sensitive to the difference between certainty and high probability, but not very sensitive to differences in probability (Tversky and Kahneman 1974).

In a cognitive map modality is tackled in two ways. Firstly through the expression of contrast some notion of the exclusivity of the construct can be obtained, and some knowledge of the range of elements to which it applies. Secondly the strength with which a given link is held can be represented, for example using the software it is possible to mask out concepts and links which are regarded to be less certain (in a rank ordering fashion), and so examine the argument only in terms of its most significant elements.

There may also be a need to express the certainty of belief in a more measured way, through a rank ordering, or as a probability, as is done with system dynamics (Coyle 1977) or expert system models for decision making (Barr and Feigenbaum 1981). There are significant problems with this however in terms of the amount of effort that is need to evaluate a map in this way. It represents however, a possible area of future research, and is discussed under this heading in the

final chapter.

### Methodology for this thesis

It may seem a little odd that the methodological discussion should follow after the discussion of theory and method which it is supposed to comment on, but following Eden and Harris it is important to determine the aims of the inquiry before methodological choices can be made. This gives a less prominent, though no less important, role to methodological issues (Eden and Harris 1975, chapter 6).

In the above sections the issue of a researcher getting to know about and represent his own, or someone else's thinking, was taken for granted, although it was pointed out, especially in relation to Balance Theory, that the model construction process is problematic in terms of the 'fit' between model and the original data. As the data was collected in three different ways, there are some issues which are relevant only to each method. The methods and these specific issues are described in detail in the appropriate chapters, and the general foundation for all the methods is described here.

Before discussing the methodology specific to the task of this thesis, the purpose and nature of methodological debate is clarified so that the implications of the methodology are made apparent. Methodological choice arises in any research and concerns the nature of the inquiry as a whole. It establishes the criteria on which the work may be evaluated, and sets up the rules which determine the selection of data; what is to count and what is not to count as support for a theory or methodology.

An accurate discussion of the methodological problems for the study of social life is that of Eden and Harris (1975), who see the fundamental problem in the study of a social system as that of its inherent complexity. This complexity arises from the variety of the system elements and the fact that such variety renders an exhaustive description of the possible system states an infeasible task. The uncertainty in deciding which features to abstract from this variety, in any study, which Eden and Harris call probabilism is the essence of methodological choice. Where should the system boundary be drawn?

Rules for drawing this boundary around knowledge are plentiful, and the choice of a set of rules is of course the methodological choice. One representative set of rules is that of Logical Positivism (although strictly speaking this name covers a wide variety of different rule sets), which may for the purpose of this discussion be considered together. The principle of verifiability (Ayer 1936), which defines knowledge in terms of what can be empirically shown to be the case, is a principal rule of this methodological approach. The rules of empirical enquiry, or variations of them, thus define the system boundary. They are the criteria for the variety reduction exercise.

Such rules however have an inherent circular and self-fulfilling character, for example, since empirical inquiry can only provide by definition certain sorts of data it cannot offer any information which relates to the the adequacy of the bases on which it is established. This is the circular nature of methodological choice (Norman 1976). If further fundamental rules were posited to justify the original rules, then these further rules must themselves be justified, and there is an infinite regress. Hegel's conclusion from this was that



it was not possible to secure the foundations of any inquiry, in the way that some philosophers and scientists had hoped. What is possible through methodology is to make explicit the bias that the choice of method brings in, and to further inquire whether the choice fits the purpose of the inquiry. This suggests following Eden and Harris that purpose should define methodology, rather than vice versa. For example positivist approaches to social research are usually criticized on the grounds that there is a mismatch between the purpose of finding out how decisions are made and the methods used to do this. The criteria of Logical Positivism are inadequate for selecting data in relation to that purpose.

"If there is no objective other than that of building a model of a system that exists within a defined system boundary then there can be no reasonable way of conducting the variety reduction exercise"

(Eden and Harris 1975)

This also implies that the issue of methodological choice is a dynamic rather than a static one, and that there should be an interaction between data selection, theory, and the rules for the selection of the data.

#### An appropriate methodology for the study of argument

Chapter 1 argued that argument to be adequately explained as a feature of organizational life, must include argument as part of a social process and as an activity indulged in primarily by individuals. Which is to say that the outcome of an argument cannot be solely explained with reference to the public, consensual rules that establish criteria for 'rational' behaviour. It is also

necessary to take account of the personal 'logic' or rules that individuals use in assessing or taking part in argument. Such rules it has been argued in this chapter can be usefully represented and studied through the theory of personal constructs and the development from this of cognitive mapping. Such a choice of method and theory has carried with it an assumption about the unit of analysis which is to form the base of the inquiry. This unit is clearly taken to be a phenomenal one, that is the account that an individual gives of his experience. Perhaps the need for this choice in relation to the purpose of understanding argument is best illustrated by contrasting it with an alternative choice, which is common in persuasion research, namely that of dependent and independent variables obtained from experimental situations. This also may illustrate the more general criticisms of Positivist methodologies in relation to this field of work.

The 'variable' choice seems inadequate precisely because it excludes the individuals' own experience of a situation as a relevant explanation of the event. Harre (1979) describe this same worry in relation to current work in social psychology:

"Most of social psychology seemed to me to be concerned more with the reactions of idealized automata in bland, anomic environments than with the way real human beings carried on their affairs together."

(Harre 1979)

But then as discussed earlier, Positivist methodology has a different purpose to understanding behaviour, it has rather, a concern with obtaining 'sure and certain' knowledge. Reason and Rowan (1981) in

establishing the need for a new paradigm of social research make this point even more strongly:

"people are seen as isolable from their normal social context, people are stripped of all that gives their action meaning and in this way they are trivialised."

(Reason and Rowan 1981)

It is not so much that they are trivialised, but that the data obtained in experiments does not relate to the express purpose of the experiment, but is used as though it should. Crucial in this regard is the tendency to generalize and abstract rules of behaviour:

"The whole language of ..... dependent and independent variables and so forth is highly suspect. It assumes that people can be reduced to a set of variables which are somehow equivalent across persons and across situations."

(Reason and Rowan 1981)

Actually there is no doubt that people can be reduced to a set of variables it is done frequently in the course of much experimental research, but is this is a useful way of developing practical theories of individual behaviour?

The following considers in more detail some of the methodological problems of 'variable' research, and compares them with an alternative method.

a) Consideration of a few variables in a laboratory experiment necessarily places the subject in an environment which is unusual, and not the normal context in which he makes decisions. If these influences are absent how can the decision making theory be transferred back to the normal context without assuming that those influences were

negligible. But how can that assumption be made without a study or theory about those influences? It also ignores (Milgram 1965) the influences of the new situation, that is, the situation of 'being the subject of an experiment'.

b) The actions which the subject is asked to make are also usually of a highly restricted nature, and are not things which he normally does. The things that we 'normally do' are much more an integral part of ourselves than a 'one off' experimental task which we see as a 'one off' situation. So again the transfer of theory is questionable.

c) More practically the subjects tend to come from particular groups in society, for example college students. How these results can be related to other people is not clear.

Chapter 1 has argued that an individual interpretation of argument is necessary to understanding particular argument events. The research has therefore been designed to focus on individual accounts and descriptions of argument, and to follow the course of debate between a limited number of individuals. The research therefore studies arguers in relation to their everyday tasks. Following Harre and Secord (1972) and others (Lyman and Scott 1968, Gowler and Legge 1980) the unit of analysis is taken to be the individual's account of his actions

One difficulty in using accounts is that of indexicality.

Indexicality refers to the problems of interpretation which arise because the meaning of an account depends in part on the separate cognitive systems that the account giver and listener have developed. In listening to an account, the listener inevitably selects for

attention portions of it which sound more interesting to him rather than the account giver, and thereby inevitably misses some of the meaning which the account giver intended to convey. The methods need to provide therefore for a way of checking that this meaning can be made more explicit, and so open to more careful consideration. Feedback to the account giver can be a helpful check in this respect, or if the original data is available to other researchers there is some possibility for checking interpretation. Additional sources and cross-reference are useful in this respect. The transparent nature of cognitive mapping, discussed earlier, can also make checking of data against future models easier and less prone to this kind of distortion.

The authenticity of the account must also be considered. Does the account adequately represent the view of events that the account giver had at the time that the events were occurring? In relation to argument this can be an especial problem, since there is a social pressure to provide justifications for action rather than to provide an account of the reasons that led to the action. To some extent this points to a need for attention to the relationship between the researcher and the account giver in which some form of trust is established. This often implies the need for a careful negotiation between researcher and researched as to the nature and needs of each party. Even so there can be no final check on authenticity, indeed there may be occasions when the account giver is not able to distinguish between a post event justification and a prior reason for action. For document research it points to the need for there to be cross-referenced accounts of the event where possible, or at least

indications that the account 'fits' others' impressions of the account giver.

Of overall concern is the way in which the researcher 'addresses' the data that he discovers, and the way in which he discovers it. The work in this thesis is broadly governed by the related work of the sociology of defining the situation (McHugh 1968), of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), of ethnomethodologists and perhaps most directly with the symbolic interactionist working with a dramaturgical model of organizational life (Mangham 1978, Blumer 1969).

## Summary of Chapter 2

### Representing argument

Chapter 1 suggested that argument should be studied within the context of a subjective model of man as a reasoning and a valuing being. The personal construct theory of Kelly was introduced as a way of combining the rational and the social aspects of argument.

This thesis proposes however not just a new theoretical basis for understanding argument but also a method which will be of practical use in the preparation and performance of argument. This chapter therefore tackled the issues involved in representing and describing argument.

Representation of argument is closely linked to an understanding of the nature of thinking and cognition. Cognition has variously been described as a purely logical operation of the mind, and contrastingly as an entirely subjective process. A common feature of most of these descriptions, including that of problem solving activity, is the sequential or 'if-then' nature of thought. Thinking is essentially a propositional structure according to these schemes. Even though these structures do not necessarily follow the rules of logic they do nonetheless have a coherent and interpretable structure. The coherency and consistency of each individual cognitive system is as the contrasting work of Piaget, Freud and Kelly implies a result of individuals' attempts to structure experience in a predictable way. In the context of prediction the issue of modality, that is the strength with which a proposition is put forward, is significant because different contexts imply the use

of different modalities.

Argument can be seen as an expression of part of an individual's interpretation of experience, and an attempt to persuade others to adopt part of that system as their own.

Cognitive mapping, balance theory, and argumentation studies were described as methods of representing argument each with a different degree of adherence to subjective models of man. They illustrate further the 'if-then' structures used to describe thinking.

Cognitive mapping was described in detail as this is the method used to represent argument in this thesis, it has some advantages over other methods. For example it is relatively easy for non-experts to follow, and the causal structure of the models makes it easy to represent the essential structure of an argument. However its adoption as an appropriate method follows from its roots in Personal Construct Theory, and the close link between basic theory and method that this enables.

The choice of a method and theory leads naturally to a discussion of methodology. It was argued that the role of methodology is to examine the 'fit' between the aims of an inquiry, and its methods. To reveal rather than to eliminate bias, and so potentially ensure that the methods are appropriate to the aim. As Eden and Harris argued it is only by knowing the aim that other choices can be evaluated. The circular nature of methodological choice implies that methodology alone cannot firmly ground any inquiry. Also the methods will inevitably contain at least an element of self-fulfilment, since the choice of any method will restrict the possibilities that are



envisaged. For example, the use of cognitive mapping will to some extent 'guarantee' that arguments have a particular structure in this thesis, since cognitive mapping has an inherent model of argument within it.

The aim of this thesis is a better understanding of argument in organizational settings, leading to practical methods which may be of use in the preparation and practice of argument. The research design has therefore taken the form of a study of three different settings in which argument was according to the available evidence a significant influence. These settings were studied with techniques which enable the researcher to focus on argument. The test of this work is whether these ideas and methods prove a substantial aid to understanding argument in these restricted conditions. Of interest will be the features of argument that act persuasively in different situations, and the wider implications that this may have for the preparation and practice of argument.

### CHAPTER 3

#### ARGUMENT AND VALUING

##### Introduction

In this chapter the theories developed in the first two chapters are applied in greater detail to an analysis of a personal diary, in particular to the analysis of an issue in which argument as a persuasive medium seemed to play a significant part. The bulk of the chapter is concerned with showing how the techniques were used to gather and assess the data, and showing how the theories can assist in understanding the nature of the argument. This chapter focusses upon understanding values and looks in detail at how individuals' values affect the persuasiveness of arguments.

##### The research setting

The research was based upon a reading and analysis of the Diaries of Richard Crossman. Richard Crossman was a prominent Labour Party member of Parliament holding a variety of senior cabinet posts from 1964 to his death in 1974. This included the period of the Labour Party government under Harold Wilson from October 1964 to 1970. The issue taken from the diaries covers the period from October 1964, (immediately after a general election), to February 1965. During this period Crossman was Minister of Housing (Crossman 1975).

In October 1964 Crossman was considering a planning application from S.R.L. Investments Ltd, who intended to develop 420 acres of agricultural land near the village of Hartley in Kent. The development provided residential accomodation for 5,000-6,000 people. The land in question formed part of the proposed Green Belt for Kent

under a proposal from Kent County Council in 1960. A public inquiry had been held, and the Department's inspector had recommended that planning permission be refused. The final decision on appeal rested with Crossman.

The issue is of interest because it is possible to follow in some detail over a period of months Crossman's changing arguments about this planning decision, as the consequences of the decision became more serious for him personally, culminating in a debate in the House of Lords. Because it was his first major planning decision Crossman took some care over considering the arguments put forward, and it is possible to follow these through the diary. It provides therefore a good opportunity to look at the way in which arguments are evaluated and marshalled by an individual in coming to a decision, and the way in which those arguments change when the consequences of the decision are unexpected. The diary material also potentially provides access to personal and individual reflections by Crossman which he brings to bear in assessing and preparing arguments, but which are usually <sup>a</sup>unavailable from public reports of events. Before turning to the issue in detail the following sections tackle the research and methodological questions which are raised in using this sort of material.

#### The use of personal diaries as a base for research data

It is important to distinguish between the use of a diary as part of a piece of historical research, that is, research which is attempting to make statements about historical events or figures, and the use of the diary as part of social research, that is, an attempt to make

statements about the author of the diary. The Crossman diaries were published in 1975, and later serialized in the 'Times' newspaper. The Diaries caused a heated public debate focussed mainly on the issue of open government, and the right of politicians to reveal details of discussions between members of the government (Robson 1976, Young, H. 1977). A great deal of the popular debate also concerned the accuracy of the diaries, about which there was some controversy (Klein 1977). Wilson's account of the events over devaluation claims that Crossman's interpretation of there being a series of covert meetings and conspiracies between senior members of the government to be a typical piece of Crossman fantasy (Wilson 1971). Such issues are less relevant to this thesis because the focus of interest is on Crossman's own interpretation of the events. The issue that arises for this thesis is whether or not the diaries may be considered a genuine reflection of Crossman's views at the time. The following problems may arise in making an assessment of the adequacy of the diaries as a genuine reflection of the diarist's views.

a) Whilst a diary may initially be supposed to reflect a diarist's opinion, it may be that the diary is written for another purpose, for example to create an appropriate historical picture of the author. Indeed for influential figures this may be an especially relevant problem (Haines 1977).

b) The diary may act as a means of justifying rather than explaining action, and may contain an element of self-deception.

c) The text of diary may be less carefully written than an article intended for publication, and may contain unintentional mistakes.

d) There is often no opportunity for the researcher to check his interpretation of the diary directly with the author.

Empirically it may be possible to make some assessment of the material in relation to the above points, for example by comparing contemporary accounts and by considering the context in which the statements are made. The contemporary accounts and descriptions of Crossman lend considerable support to the idea that the diaries do represent Crossman's views as they were at the time. Even if his "perception was often clouded by his arrogance", (Haines 1977) this was equally true of his personal style in Government, as it was of his reflections in the diary (Klein 1977, Jones, G. 1977). In accounts by Wilson and Barbara Castle (who was his closest friend in political life), there is no suggestion that the diary content is anything other than 'authentic Crossman', even if the content may be a very different interpretation of events to their own (Castle 1980). Indeed a number of commentators now use the Crossman Diaries as a source of data about the period (Middlemas 1979), and government more generally (Coates 1980), and raise no doubts about the nature of the diaries as a genuine personal record. In the introduction to volume 1 Crossman also considers this issue. He states that the diary entries were usually dictated on the day indicated, and "In particular I have tried to avoid self-deception, especially about my own motives....". The Diaries were re-dictated prior to publication, at which point Crossman called in an outside advisor to check the new text against the original.

The intention of the above survey and checks is not to provide an

in-depth inquiry into the genuineness of the views expressed, such a task could only be attempted at considerable length, and is of doubtful value. Rather it was intended to show that as far as those who have expressed a view on the issue were concerned, the diaries do faithfully represent Crossman's views at the time. With these diaries there has never been any real doubt on this issue, which is why they were chosen, but such an issue would need much closer investigation where contemporaries questioned the nature of the Diaries in this way.

The use of diary material also carries with it some advantages, over other sources of data, including interviews. Diaries are likely to be a more personal account, in that they are written privately, and usually in the knowledge that their content will only be available to others, some years hence, when the author may be no longer closely involved with the personalities and events described. Unlike interviews, in which the personal interaction may colour the data, the written diary is not provided for a specific audience. For these reasons also, it may be less likely to be intended to persuade, justify, threaten, cajole, manipulate, evoke sympathy and support or otherwise influence an audience (Holsti 1976).

In the context of argument the written word also has an advantage of potentially providing a more structured account (than a verbatim transcript) of arguments involved, and the argument structure may be more emphasized. Writing also sometimes provides a forum for privately rehearsing arguments and thus the development of the argument can be seen in more detail.

As it is written at the time of the events being described the diary also offers an opportunity to follow the development of an issue, and the changes that occur may be recorded. Such data would not usually be available from a retrospective account, in this respect it is interesting to compare Wilson's book to the Crossman Diaries. In the use of documentary evidence, especially into events which have occurred some years past, there is always a shortage of data, and so the conclusions drawn are always partial and fragmentary. However as an insight into Crossman's thinking as he acted as a Labour Minister these diaries are an excellent base.

The following sections describe the development of the Hartley issue in stages. The stages roughly correspond to the dates in the diary when Crossman chose to write about Hartley, and each represents a particular group of events. The cognitive maps in Figures 3.1 to 3.3 are highlights of original coding of the diary, and therefore the text of the concepts may differ marginally from the computer models printed in this chapter. The principal references to Hartley in volume 1 of the diary are given at the end of the chapter. This description in terms of highlighted cognitive maps and interleaved explanation represents an alternative way of presenting an account of the arguments (compared to a more familiar style such as an essay), and focusses upon the essential structure of the arguments involved. A more detailed analysis is provided in a following section.

#### Hartley - early stages, Crossman is against building at Hartley.

Part of the cognitive map drawn from the diary entries in October 1964 is shown in Figure 3.1. At this stage the issue covers no more than

a brief paragraph describing the day's events. Three concepts and the arguments around them seem to sum up the features of the problem for Crossman:

[FIRST MAJOR PLANNING DECISION]

This seems to touch on the reason why the issue is thought worthy of mention, and relates back to Crossman's worries about his lack of experience in the housing and planning field. He had been expected to be given the Social Services Department on which he was an acknowledged expert, and the early pages of the diary are taken up with this worry. His actual discussion of Hartley is very brief, and he sums up his case concentrating on the amenity value of green belt, which he feels is sufficiently important to turn down the plan.

[AMENITY VALUE OF GREEN BELT IS VERY IMPORTANT]

A third concept and related arguments seems to be linked with Crossman's relations with his Departmental officials. Their advice was apparently to overrule the inspector and allow the development at Hartley.

[INSTINCT TO DISAGREE WITH OFFICIALS]

In respect of the argument used, the points to note from the description and cognitive map are:

a) The issue is decided mainly in Crossman's mind through the amenity value argument, which he holds to be a stronger case than that of his officials.



Figure 3.1 Hartley early stages

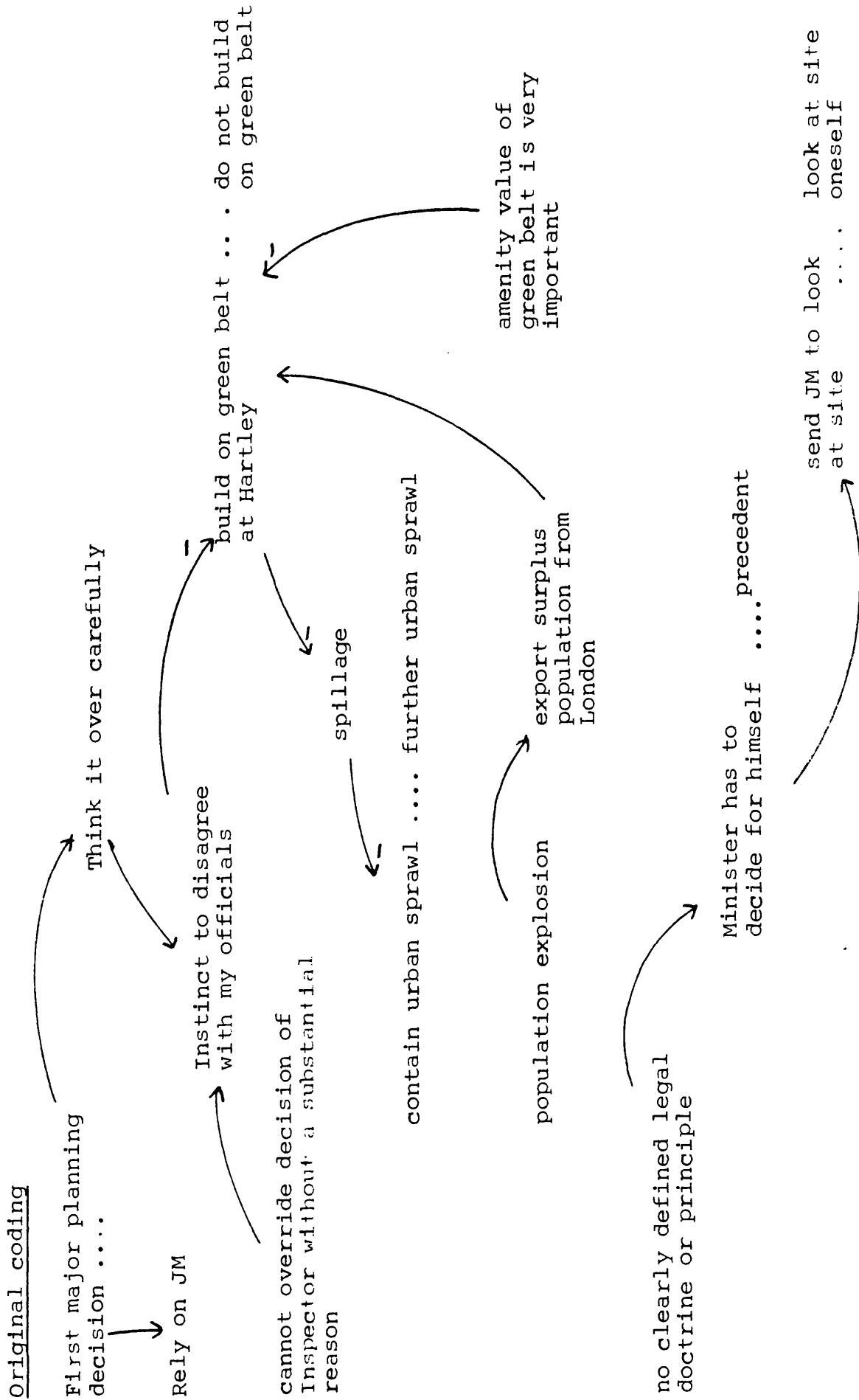


Figure 3.2 Hartley change of mind

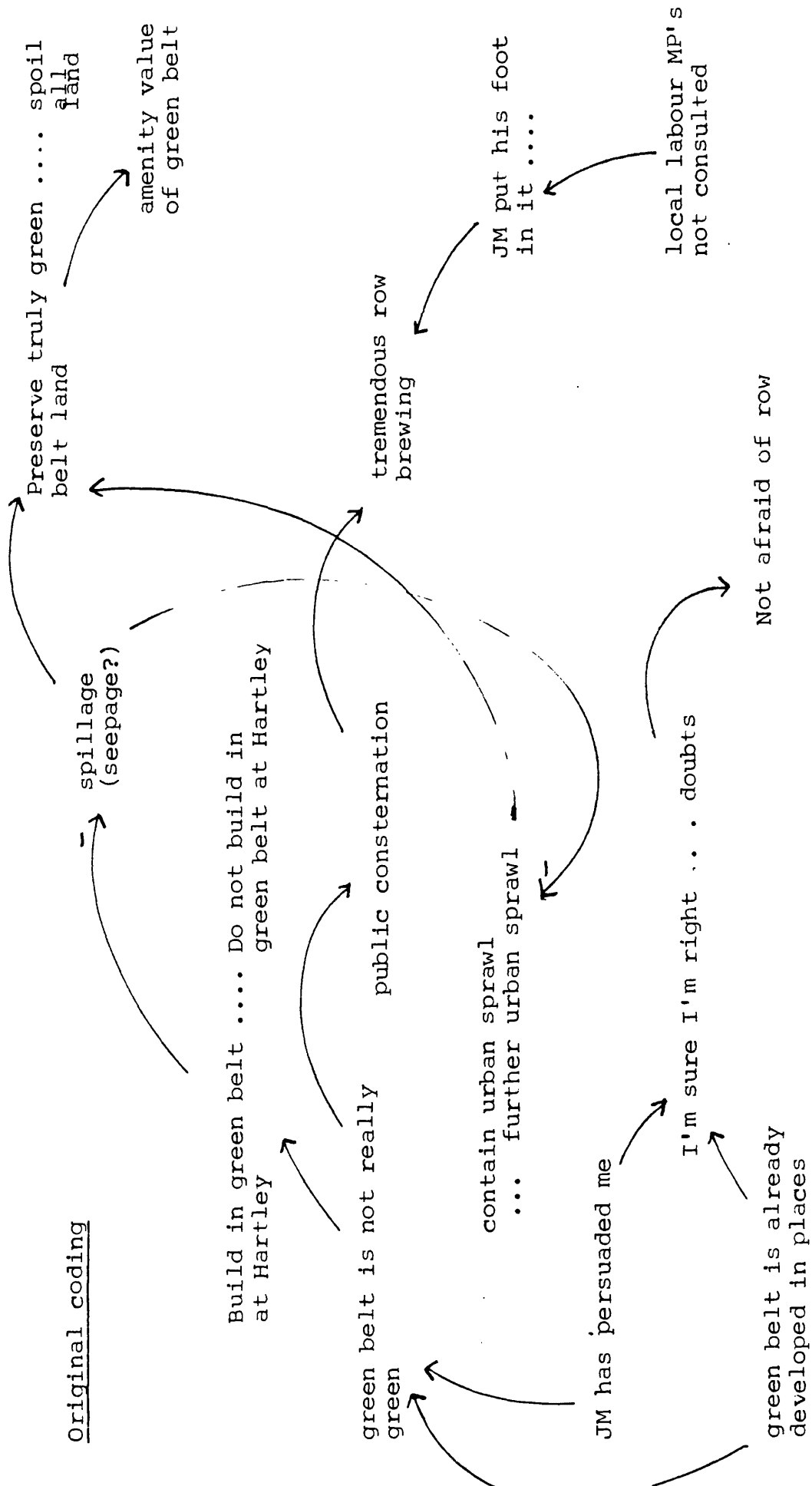


Figure 3.3 Reflections on Hartley

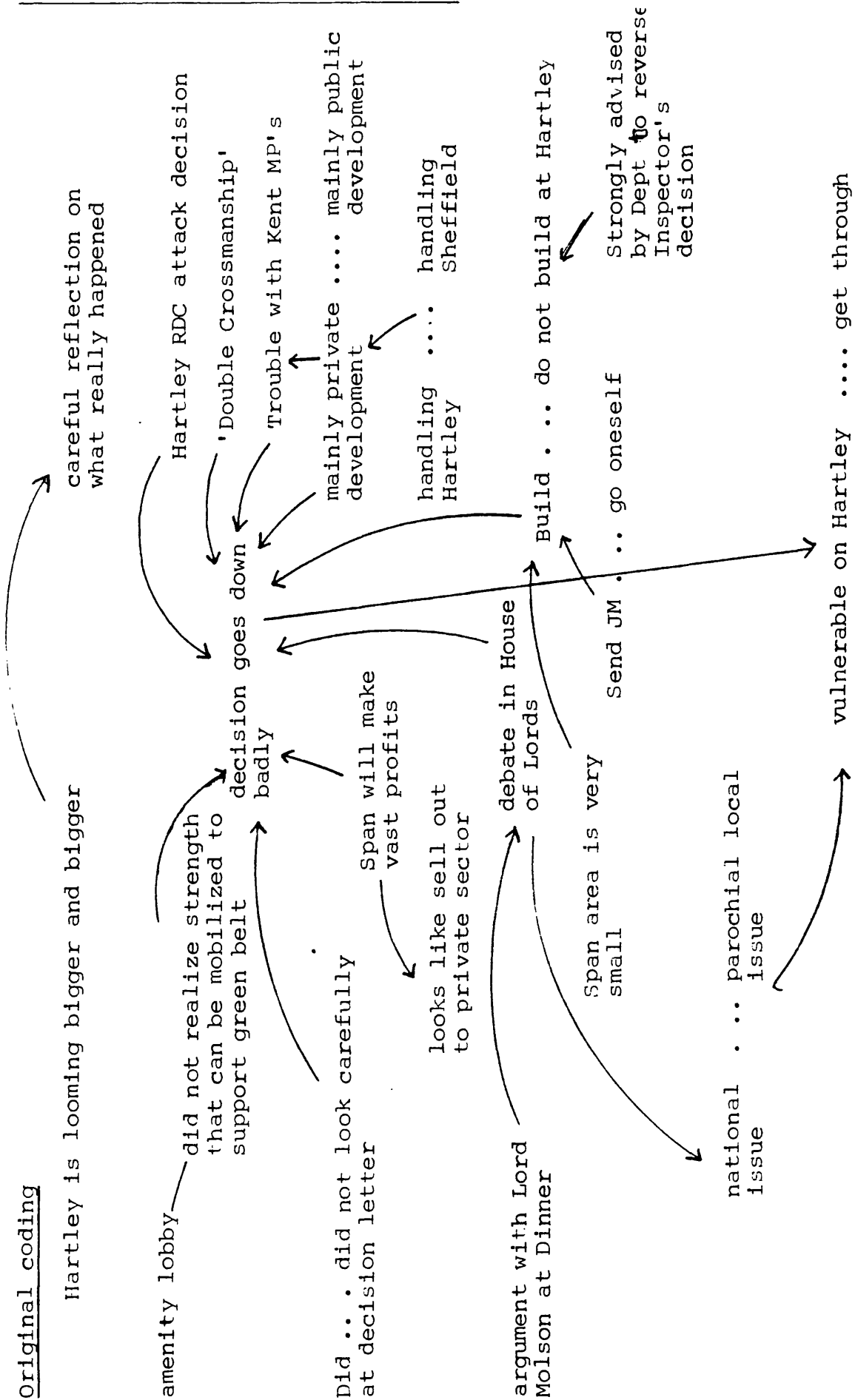


Figure 3.4      Hartley -      text

CROSSMAN DIARY - VOLUME 1  
PAGES 114 - 115

However, I thought we had weathered the storm when there came a debate in the House of Lords on the initiative of Lord Molson, the chairman of the Town and Country Planning Association.<sup>1</sup> One of my first engagements as Minister was to be the guest of the T.C.P.A. at their annual dinner and there I found myself sitting next to Molson. Perhaps I had drunk too much, perhaps I was merely irritated by his stuffy manner, but I defended the Hartley decision very strongly to him over dinner. Three weeks later I got all this back a thousandfold when he launched the debate in the House of Lords and was supported by Lord Morrison and Lord Chorley from our side of the House. Altogether, it was an extremely damaging debate—it made Hartley a national and not merely a local parochial issue. Finally, just before Christmas, there was a vicious and brilliantly clever cartoon by Osbert Lancaster in the *Daily Express* headed 'Double Crossmanship', and also to my surprise I found a strongly worded leading article in the *Sun* inspired by Sydney Jacobson.

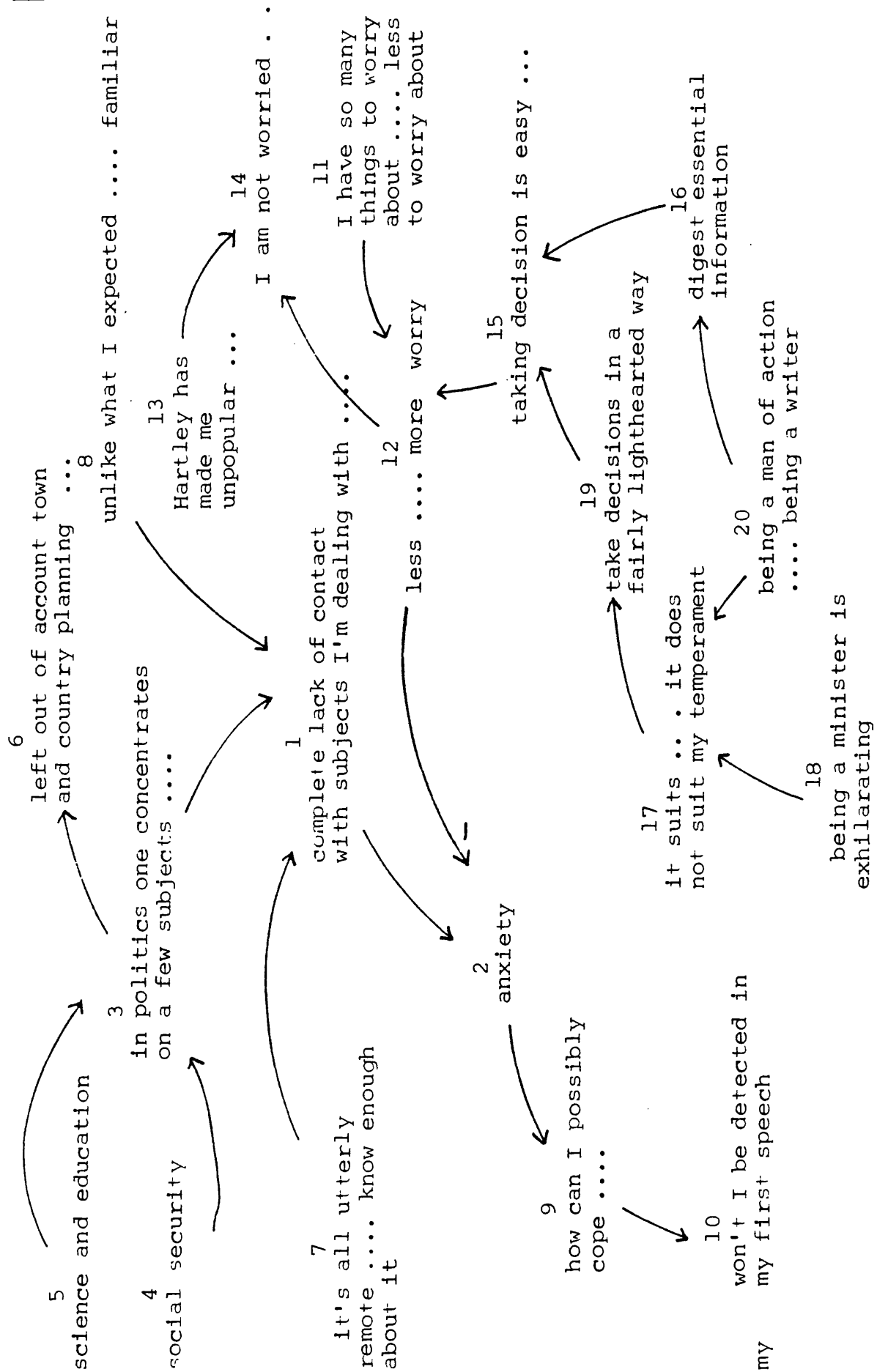
The new line of attack they all directed at me was to say that Span is a speculative group of builders who bought up the land at £70 an acre and would make vast profits. Though this sounds terrible, it is in fact an absurd charge, because what Span did was to buy the land at a low enough price to enable them to use only one-third of it for house building and to allocate two-thirds of it for public spaces, schools, hospitals, in order to create their model village. That's a perfectly adequate reply, but alas, as the Minister who is in charge in a judicial capacity, I haven't been able to reply.

What I was able to do was to have a special conference about my Chelmsley Wood decision just before Christmas. This time I took good care. I carefully briefed the Midland press; I got hold of Brian Redhead of the *Guardian* and gave lunch to the architectural correspondent of *The Times*, who is also editor of the *Architectural Review*, and as a result—with great luck—on the day of these attacks on me by Lancaster and Sydney Jacobson I actually had leading articles in the *Guardian* and *The Times* defending what I had done as a

short-term measure but warning that it would be untenable in the long run. I am also planning to publish my third big decision, on Stannington near Sheffield soon. It will be very difficult to attack me on this.

However, I am still highly vulnerable on Hartley; and over this recess I have been wondering whether instead of merely having a press conference about Sheffield I shouldn't have a press conference on the whole issue of the green belt, which would include Hartley as well as Stannington. I shall also

Figure 3.5 Ministerial decision making



b) Crossman is prepared to address the arguments because it is the first planning decision he has faced, and he has little previous experience in this field.

c) Even at this descriptive level of analysis other issues are seen to bear on the decision, such as his relationship with his officials.

#### Hartley - change of mind

By 5th December the decision on Hartley has been made, and was to allow the development. How had this change occurred and why? The argument that 'won the day' is shown in Figure 3.2. It is the argument which Crossman mentions in October as that put forward by the Developers, and which he rejected as not being a strong enough case to outweigh the 'amenity' value argument. An important part of the map is that related to the concept:

[GREEN BELT IS NOT REALLY GREEN],

(The initials JM refer to M.P. James Macoll, Crossman's Parliamentary Private Secretary, and on the computer listings (Figure 3.6), BM refers to the M.P. Bob Mellish).

Macoll was keenly interested in planning and had been involved in planning issues for a number of years (MacColl 1957). Another important influence that Crossman mentions is one of his civil servants, Jimmy James, who he mentions has helped to persuade him to this different view on Hartley.

From the point of view of the argument, what seems to have happened here is that Crossman is gradually developing a more elaborate (through trying out ideas and seeking advice), view of the nature of

Green Belt land. Rather than being a single monolithic concept it has split into two, namely:

[PRESERVE TRULY GREEN BELT LAND .... SPOIL ALL GREEN BELT LAND]

The preservation of the land which is still truly green belt now becomes the objective, so that the amenity value argument would still apply to this, but is weakened when applied to all green belt land. That is, some of the current green belt land has already been spoilt and so does not have the amenity value that Crossman attached originally to all green belt land. At the end of the section there is some mention of possible rows within the party because of this decision. At this point Crossman seems to believe that these rows are mainly due to a failure by Jim MacColl to consult the local M.P.'s before the decision was taken. As in October Crossman mentions that he is sure that he is right!

In this context Crossman appears to have been actively prepared to look for and be persuaded by arguments in a specialism which was new to him. The arguments put forward were essentially arguments in the context of planning, and the two people Crossman particularly mentions are deeply interested in planning issues. Jimmy James and Jim MacColl seem to have put forward a good case, and one that Crossman was prepared to listen to. Crossman himself has defined this as an arena in which this sort of argument may take place, and he is now prepared to defend this decision because it is 'technically' right. The authority and expertise of Jimmy James and Jim MacColl seem to have been very influential here. Earlier sections of the Diary also suggest that Crossman was receptive to these arguments

because of a more general concern that he had with the nature of Ministerial decision making. The concepts around

[DIGEST ESSENTIAL INFORMATION]

reflect this concern, in addition Figure 3.5 shows a small map representing Crossman's reflections about the nature of Ministerial decision making, a subject which he discussed on a number of occasions, see for example the section on page 99 of the Diary.

At this stage Crossman talks about planning issues mainly in isolation to other issues, and seems prepared to consider them on this 'technical' basis. Such a decision making style seems to be an important element in the way in which the Hartley decision was taken.

#### Hartley - a political storm

Away from Parliament for the Christmas recess, Crossman writes that he has been thinking a lot about what he calls 'his first major upset, the Hartley affair'. It is he says 'looming up bigger and bigger in my political life'. Figure 3.3 shows part of the map of this reflection, and it is clear that there are a number of strands of argument which have turned this into a political row. The debate in the House of Lord's which appears to have been sparked off by a private argument between Crossman and Lord Molson, turned the affair into a national issue. Also the reaction of the local M.P.'s and Labour Party against the decision seems to have been more forceful than Crossman expected (Hansard, 21st December 1964).

In this latter respect the portion of the map around the concept:



[DECISION GOES DOWN BADLY ....]

reflects criticisms of inconsistencies in Crossman's actions.

Crossman's actions and arguments seem to contradict his own socialist views and previous Labour Party policy on green belt land. A cartoon in the Daily Express which Crossman quotes summed this up as 'Double Crossmanship'.

Also Crossman admits that he completely underestimated the vehemence of the reaction from supporters of the preservation of green belt (the 'amenity lobby'), and was to this extent unprepared for the storm of protest that his decision caused.

Interestingly Crossman does not refer to his original views on green belt, and in discussing possible counter measures does not seem prepared to put forward his argument based on the 'green belt is not really green' concept as a public defence of his position. The elements of contradiction in Crossman's arguments and decision seem to be the crucial factors in escalating this issue, and giving opponents a basis for strong counter arguments to be mounted.

#### Hartley - defusing the row

When Crossman writes of the issue in March it is clear that it is gradually subsiding as an issue. Crossman suggests that the line of defence that he decided on in January of attempting to defuse Hartley, by discussing it in a wider planning context, and of presenting it as an exceptional case have helped in this process. He has also taken particular care to personally draft the letters explaining other planning decisions at Sheffield and Water Orton

(Chelmsley Wood), and so avoid Departmental intervention. His 'private' thought is that the decision was right but badly handled, mainly by Jim MacColl and the Department.

The most interesting intervention in this period came in the political arena as Crossman realized how critical the events might be for his own career, (although they turned out not to be). Later in January when the issue was at its public height, he sought support from Wilson on his handling of the issue.

#### A description of arguments

The preceding sections show the use of cognitive maps to portray arguments. The maps do not each relate to specific pages of the diary, but a comparison of Figure 3.3 and the original text from the diary in Figure 3.4 illustrates to some extent the relationship between the original data and the cognitive map. In addition the description of the Hartley affair highlights some features of the event which require further explanation. This is attempted through the analysis of the cognitive maps produced, and is described in the following sections. Some of the issues are also discussed in the context of a broader examination of the issue in chapter 4.

#### Analysis of the Hartley issue

In looking at this issue as described above there are some striking features to explain.

- a) Why did Crossman make a decision on Hartley which in retrospect was politically so dangerous?
- b) Why was he so surprised by the strength of the support for the case against Hartley?

- c) Why did he choose to 'defuse' Hartley rather than defend it?
- d) Why do planning arguments become much less important?
- e) Why did he accept arguments which led him eventually to such a difficult situation?

To tackle these questions is to tackle the nature of persuasive argument, and the links between argument and individual values.

Through the cognitive maps drawn from the Diary material changes in the way the issue is considered are highlighted. The maps form the basis of the data for building a picture of the values and their hierarchical relationship that Crossman held at the time.

Identification of the 'things that matter' for Crossman, that is of his values, provides a basis for answering some of the above questions.

The maps shown represent portions of larger cognitive maps which record Crossman's writings on the Hartley issue. For the purpose of analysis each map was transferred to a computer model using the COPE software. The computer model similarly records concepts and the links between them but also offers analysis facilities. A large combined computer model was constructed by adding together the separate models built around the maps described above, but excluding the part of stage 1 which contains Crossman's original thoughts on the planning issue, since the views stated in October seem to have been abandoned by Crossman, and are not subsequently considered. The process of adding maps together involved two operations. Firstly the concepts in each map were all placed in a new model and re-numbered. The links between concepts were not altered at this stage, so that there was no connection between the maps at this point except that they were all

part of the same model. Secondly the concepts and their links were compared and new links were created by merging concepts which apparently had similar meanings. Merging concepts involved deleting one concept and replacing it with another, but retaining all the links of the deleted concept to other concepts. The resulting complete model is listed in Figure 3.6. The analysis procedures were then applied to the combined model to consider argument and values.

Figure 3.6 Combined COPE model for Crossman

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1  FIRST MAJOR PLANNING DECISION . . . . . [not]FIRST MAJOR PLANNING DECISION
2  THINK IT OVER CAREFULLY . . . . . [not]THINK IT OVER CAREFULLY
3  NEED A SUBSTANTIAL REASON . . . . . [not]NEED A SUBSTANTIAL REASON
4  INSTINCT TO DISAGREE WITH OFFICIALS . .[not]INSTINCT TO DISAGREE WITH OFFIC
5  OVERRIDE . . . . . DO NOT OVERRIDE: DECISION OF PLANNING INSPECTOR
6  BUILD ON GREEN BELT LAND AT HARTLEY . . . . . DO NOT BUILD AT HARTLEY
7  AMENITY VALUE OF GREEN BELT IS VERY IMPORTANT . .[not]AMENITY VALUE OF GREE
8  DO NOT BUILD ON GREEN BELT . . . . . BUILD ON GREEN BELT
9  SPAN MODEL VILLAGE NEEDED . . . . . SPAN NOT NEEDED
10 EXPORT SURPLUS LONDON POP . . . . . [not]EXPORT SURPLUS LONDON POP
11 NEED TO COPE WITH LARGE LONDON POP . . . . . NO OVERSPILL PRESSURE
12 CONTAIN URBAN SPRAWL . . . . . FURTHER URBAN SPRAWL
13 CONTROLLED INCURSION INTO GREEN B . . . . . RANDOM USE OF GREEN B
14 NO CLEARLY DEFINED LEGAL DOCTRINE OF PRINCIPLE. . [not]NO CLEARLY DEFINED L
16 MINISTER HAS TO DECIDE FOR HIMSELF . . . . . ACCEPT ADVICE OF OFFICIALS
17 SEND JM TO LOOK AT SITE . . . . . LOOK AT SITE ONESELF
18 [+]PUBLIC CONSTERNATION . . . . . [-]PUBLIC CONSTERNATION
19 TREMENDOUS ROW . . . . . [not]TREMENDOUS ROW
20 GREEN BELT IS ALREADY DEVELOPED IN PLACES . .[not]GREEN BELT IS ALREADY DEV
21 GREEN BELT IS NOT REALLY GREEN . . . . . [not]GREEN BELT IS NOT REALLY GREEN
22 GIVE WAY. . . . . DO NOT GIVE WAY: ON WYTHALL
23 VISIT BIRMINGHAM . . . . . DO NOT VISIT BIRMINGHAM
25 I'M SURE IM RIGHT . . . . . UNCERTAIN
26 LOCAL MPS NOT CONSULTED . . . . . LOCAL MPS CONSULTED
27 PREVENT BIRMINGHAM SPRAWL OUT TO REDDITCH . . . CREATE SPRAWL TO REDDITCH
28 JM PUT HIS FOOT IN IT . . . . . [not]JM PUT HIS FOOT IN IT
29 [+]CONFIDENCE IN JM . . . . . [-]CONFIDENCE IN JM
30 JM DID NOT WARN OF POLITICAL WRATH. . [not]JM DID NOT WARN OF POLITICAL WRA
31 NOT AFRAID OF ROW . . . . . AFRAID OF ROW
32 SEEPAGE . . . . . PLANNED INCURSIONS
33 PRESERVE TRULY GREEN BELT . . . . . SPOIL ALL GREEN BELT
34 TAKE COMMONSENSE DECISION (PERSONAL JUDGEMENT). . [not]TAKE COMMONSENSE DEC
35 ABSOLUTELY VITAL MINISTER SHOULD SEE FOR HIMSELF. . [not]ABSOLUTELY VITAL M
36 MINISTER GOES . . . . . MINISTER DOES NOT GO
37 DEPARTMENT THINK VISIT WILL FIND NEW EVIDENCE . .[not]DEPARTMENT THINK VISI
38 JUDGMENT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING . . . . . [not]JUDGMENT WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING
39 DEPT SUGGEST IF YOU SEE ONE MUST SEE ALL. . [not]DEPT SUGGEST IF YOU SEE ON
40 NOT SEE FOR MYSELF . . . . . SEE FOR MYSELF
41 BEGIN QUIET VISITS . . . . . [not]BEGIN QUIET VISITS
42 MOVING SAME WAY ON SHEFFIELD AS HARTLEY . .[not]MOVING SAME WAY ON SHEFFIEL
43 RIGID GREEN BELT POLICY . . . . . FLEXIBLE GREEN BELT POLICY
44 CAN STRANGLE A CITY . . . . . [not]CAN STRANGLE A CITY
45 SO MANY PEOPLE TO HOUSE . . . . . [not]SO MANY PEOPLE TO HOUSE
46 NEW TOWNS NOT ENOUGH . . . . . NEW TOWNS COPE
47 NEW TOWNS SOME DISTANCE AWAY . . . . . [not]NEW TOWNS SOME DISTANCE AWAY
48 NEED. . . . . DO NOT NEED: PLACES NEARER CITY
49 BELT NOT INVIOLETE . . . . . BELT INVIOLETE
50 PLANNING DECISION QUITE DELIBERATELY MADE . .[not]PLANNING DECISION QUITE D
51 PLEASED . . . . . NOT PLEASED: WITH DECISION
52 GOOD GROUND ON WHICH TO FIGHT . . . . . [not]GOOD GROUND ON WHICH TO FIGHT
53 [+]DEPT PRESSURE FOR QUICK DECISION . . [-]DEPT PRESSURE FOR QUICK DECISION
54 WILD AND WHIRLWIND ATTACK . . . . . [not]WILD AND WHIRLWIND ATTACK
55 NEED FOR CAREFUL REFLECTION . . . . . HASTY

```

Figure 3.6 (continued)

56 PUBLIC MEETING IN KENT . . . . .[not]PUBLIC MEETING IN KENT  
 57 JUDGE . . . . . NOT ABLE TO JUDGE: PEOPLE'S REACTIONS  
 58 RESIST. . . . .DO NOT RESIST: PRESSURE FROM DEPT  
 59 REALISE GREEN BELT IS SACRED COW . . . . PEOPLE NOT TOO WORRIED ABOUT GR B  
 60 DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH SPECIAL CASE IN LARGE COMMITTEE. . [not]DIFFICULT TO  
 61 BUILD . . . . .DO NOT BUILD: AT SHEFFIELD  
 62 [+]TROUBLE WITH KENT MPS. . . . . [-]TROUBLE WITH KENT MPS  
 63 HARTLEY RDC IS LABOUR . . . . . HARTLEY IS CONSERVATIVE  
 64 HARTLEY DECISION ATTACKED IN PAPERS . [not]HARTLEY DECISION ATTACKED IN PA  
 68 MISTAKEN. . . . . CORRECT: DECISION  
 69 BAD . . . . .GOOD: START ON PLANNING DECISIONS  
 71 DIGEST ESSENTIAL INFORMATION . . . . .[not]DIGEST ESSENTIAL INFORMATION  
 72 TAKE DECISION EASILY . . . . . LINGER OVER DECISIONS  
 73 BEING A MINISTER . . . . .[not]BEING A MINISTER  
 74 [+]UNPOPULARITY OF DECISION . . . . . [-]UNPOPULARITY OF DECISION  
 75 DECISION GOES DOWN BADLY . . . . . DECISION GOES DOWN WELL  
 77 HARTLEY LOOMING BIGGER AND BIGGER . [not]HARTLEY LOOMING BIGGER AND BIGGER  
 78 [+]NEED FOR OVERSPILL ESTATES . . . . . [-]NEED FOR OVERSPILL ESTATES  
 79 [+]POPULARITY OF MINISTER . . . . . [-]POPULARITY OF MINISTER  
 80 NEED TO REFLECT ON HARTLEY ISSUE . . . . .FORGET  
 81 HARTLEY RDC UPSET . . . . . HARTLEY RDC NOT UPSET  
 82 DECISION LETTER GAVE POLICY . . . . .DECISION LOOKS LIKE AFTERTHOUGHT  
 84 DID NOT CHECK DECISION LETTER . . . . . CHECKED DECISION LETTER  
 85 DEPT DID. . . . . DEPT DID NOT: ADVISE OF DANGERS  
 86 I WAS NEW MINISTER . . . . .EXPERIENCED MINISTER  
 87 SPAN SITE IS VERY SMALL . . . . .LARGE SITE  
 88 DEFENCE OF GREEN BELT IS VERY STRONG . . . . .LITTLE DEFENCE  
 89 STRONGLY ADVISED BY DEPT TO REVERSE INSPECTORS DECISION . [not]STRONGLY AD  
 90 ANTI CARTOON . . . . .[not]ANTI CARTOON  
 91 MAINLY PUBLIC . . . . . MAINLY PRIVATE: DEVELOPMENT  
 92 LOOKS LIKE SELL OUT TO PRIVATE SECTOR . [not]LOOKS LIKE SELL OUT TO PRIVAT  
 93 LA ESTATE TURNED DOWN AT HARTLEY . . [not]LA ESTATE TURNED DOWN AT HARTLEY  
 94 LABOUR MINISTER OPEN TO CRITICS . . . . .NO CRITICISM  
 95 ARGUMENT WITH LORD MOLSON AT DINNER . [not]ARGUMENT WITH LORD MOLSON AT DI  
 96 DAMAGING DEBATE IN LORDS . . . . .[not]DAMAGING DEBATE IN LORDS  
 97 HAVE JUDICIAL POSITION . . . . .[not]HAVE JUDICIAL POSITION  
 98 MINISTER OF HOUSING . . . . .NOT A MINISTER  
 99 HOLD. . . . . DO NOT HOLD: CAREFUL PRESS CONFERENCE  
 100 PLACE HARTLEY IN WIDER CONTEXT . . . . . HARTLEY IS OFFHAND DECISION  
 101 NATIONAL. . . . .LOCAL: ISSUE  
 102 ABLE. . . . . NOT ABLE : TO REPLY TO ATTACKS  
 103 FAVOURABLE ARTICLES IN PRESS . . . . .[not]FAVOURABLE ARTICLES IN PRESS  
 104 DESCRIBE HARTLEY AS SHORT TERM MEASURE . . . . HARTLEY LOOKS LIKE POLICY  
 105 NEW ATTACKS . . . . . ISSUE DIES DOWN  
 106 MAINTAIN. . . . . LESSEN: MY STANDING AS A MINISTER  
 107 JM HANDLED AFFAIR BADLY . . . . . [not]JM HANDLED AFFAIR BADLY  
 108 PUBLISH . . . . .DO NOT PUBLISH STANNINGTON  
 109 JM IS TERRIBLE COWARD . . . . . [not]JM IS TERRIBLE COWARD  
 110 STANNINGTON IS DIFFICULT TO ATTACK. . [not]STANNINGTON IS DIFFICULT TO ATTA

Figure 3.6 (continued)

111 [+]CONSULTATION BETWEEN LA AND RDC . . . . [-]CONSULTATION BETWEEN LA AND RDC  
 112 IMPORTANT PEOPLE WORRIED . . . . .IMPORTANT PEOPLE NOT WORRIED  
 113 GEORGE BROWN ATTACKS HARTLEY . . . . .[not]GEORGE BROWN ATTACKS HARTLEY  
 114 INVOLVE HAROLD . . . . . DO NOT INVOLVE HAROLD  
 115 [+]POLITICAL TROUBLE. . . . .[-]POLITICAL TROUBLE  
 116 COMPROMISE ON APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT SECRETARY. . [not]COMPROMISE ON APPO  
 118 NEED TO EXPLAIN POLICY MORE WIDELY . . . . . DO NOT EXPRESS POLICY  
 119 HAROLD MAY DESERT ME . . . . .[not]HAROLD MAY DESERT ME  
 120 PRESS HAROLD FOR CABINET COMMIT MENT . . . . . DO NOT PRESS FOR CAB COMM  
 121 [+]AMOUNT OF PREPARATION. . . . .[-]AMOUNT OF PREPARATION  
 122 [+]SUCCESS OF PRESS CONFERENCE. . . . .[-]SUCCESS OF PRESS CONFERENCE  
 123 GOOD. . . . . BAD: PRESS  
 124 HAROLD WILL PRESS FOR HOUSING DRIVE . [not]HAROLD WILL PRESS FOR HOUSING D  
 125 HARTLEY CAN BE SEEN AS PART OF HOUSING DRIVE. . [not]HARTLEY CAN BE SEEN AS  
 126 [+]SPEED OF LAND DEVELOPMENT. . . . .[-]SPEED OF LAND DEVELOPMENT  
 127 PUT HARTLEY BEHIND US . . . . . [not]PUT HARTLEY BEHIND US  
 128 [+]LCC USE OF HARTLEY . . . . . [-]LCC USE OF HARTLEY  
 129 LEA VALLEY ISSUE . . . . .[not]LEA VALLEY ISSUE  
 130 IVE GOT ANOTHER HARTLEY . . . . . [not]IVE GOT ANOTHER HARTLEY  
 132 DO. . . . .DO NOT: TRUST DEPT  
 133 DECISON WAS RIGHT BUT AT WRONG TIME . [not]DECISON WAS RIGHT BUT AT WRONG  
 134 EXPLAIN POLICY MORE FULLY . . . . . [not]EXPLAIN POLICY MORE FULLY  
 136 DECISION WAS RIGHT . . . . . [not]DECISION WAS RIGHT  
 137 EXTEND SPAN PROJECT TO PUBLIC HOUSING . [not]EXTEND SPAN PROJECT TO PUBLIC  
 138 FIRM AGREEMENT WITH DEVELOPERS . . . . .[not]FIRM AGREEMENT WITH DEVELOPERS  
 139 DEFUSE HARTLEY . . . . . HARTLEY GOES ON  
 140 BM IS LOYAL . . . . . [not]BM IS LOYAL  
 141 BM IS POLITICALLY FIRST RATE . . . . .[not]BM IS POLITICALLY FIRST RATE  
 142 LCC NEED OVERSPILL . . . . . [not]LCC NEED OVERSPILL  
 143 BM IS LCC MAN . . . . . [not]BM IS LCC MAN  
 144 BM SUPPORTS . . . . . BM DOES NOT SUPPORT: DEPT  
 145 BM AGREES WITH HARTLEY . . . . . BM DISAGREES WITH HARTLEY  
 146 [+]CONFIDENCE IN BM . . . . . [-]CONFIDENCE IN BM  
 147 RE-ESTABLISH PUBLIC OPINION OF ME . [not]RE-ESTABLISH PUBLIC OPINION OF ME  
 149 RELATIONS WITH DEPT IMPORTANT . . . . . [not]RELATIONS WITH DEPT IMPORTANT  
 150 NEED. . . . . DO NOT NEED: TO DEVELOP PLANNING POLICY  
 152 I DO NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT PLANNING . [not]I DO NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT PLANNING  
 153 RELY ON JM'S ADVICE . . . . . .RELY ON OWN ADVICE

### Computer analysis, argument and values

In Chapter 2 it was argued that knowledge of values is important in understanding the nature of argument and in making an assessment of the arguments that will prove influential in a particular situation. The first difficulty in this process is the identification of values that others' hold. In terms of construct theory it is the ability to play a role in another's social processes; to be able to construe their construing and recognize those aspects of another's cognitive system which have a more pivotal role within that system. Fisher adapted Toulmin's logical scheme for the analysis of argument (see Chapter 2) to include the influence of values on the arguments outcome. He assumes however, that the identification of values is a relatively trivial task, that anyone with some intelligence can do this, that the argument is a fixed entity, and that values have no influence on the choice of argument. The Crossman data suggests that values are relevant in determining the argument strategy that is chosen, and that a wide range of values may come in to play in assessing any given situation. The following section substantiates this latter claim and through a computer analysis identifies part of a value system for Crossman.

Eden, Jones and Sims from their work with various decision makers in organizations sum up some of the characteristics of those parts of our cognitive systems which we would call personal values, namely:

- suggests a preferred outcome
- defines a purpose
- points to a direction I am going in
- relatively enduring
- provides a criteria for judging outcomes
- will expend energy defending them
- it is difficult to understand why other points of view are different



These characteristics can be used to help identify areas of interest, things that matter to an individual, and which provide a motivating force in that context. The last point especially, 'it is difficult to understand why other points of view are different', suggests that Fisher's lack of concern with the identification of values may be misleading. For there may be a strong tendency to project our own values on to others since it is so difficult to effectively imagine other value systems. A scheme which more systematically attempts to identify values seems particularly important in avoiding 'traps' of this sort. The areas of interest then form the frames of reference against which arguments proceed and can be evaluated.

a) Some concepts have no further consequences, they represent end points or goals within the cognitive map, and may be akin to preferred outcomes. Not all concepts which have no further consequences fall into this category as some end-points arise from a less full exploration of an area or from inaccurate coding. In this case the selection of concepts in this category was re-checked against the original diary material, and a decision made on this basis. Some changes were made to the model as a result of this check, for instance, providing additional links for some concepts which then excluded them as end-points. Note that a number of end-points (heads) occur because of incomplete coding, or through the existence on the map of small sections not related to the rest of the map. These usually do not appear in the other analyses and so can be spotted easily.

b) Some concepts are returned to in discussion again and again, they

are concepts which the speaker (diarist) is prepared to spend energy on repeating and emphasizing them to the listener. Concepts within a cognitive map which have a large number of direct links are candidates for inclusion in this category. It may however be that some concepts are returned to and emphasized as a way of not talking about other more sensitive areas which may be more important to the speaker. In this respect the diary is probably less misleading than an interview since the diary is written in the knowledge that it will only be available after the events concerned.

c) Some concepts are supported, or support, a large number of chains of argument, suggesting that they are important in providing or requiring argumentative backing, they are also clearly concepts whose meaning is more fully elaborated than others.

d) Some concepts seem to be at the 'heart' of the map. Suggesting that if they were to change then a lot of other meanings and links in the map would be changed as well. The meaning of the cognitive system relies on these concepts more than others.

The above four categories provide concepts which are candidates for inclusion in a list of concepts which point to or refer to significant areas of the cognitive map, which represents the individual's cognitive system. It is important to note that values are not identified with specific concepts but with the areas of the map to which these concepts are pointers. The areas represent 'a matter of interest' to the individual, and it will be a matter of interest because it impinges upon or affects in some way values that the individual holds. What makes the area a 'matter of interest'

which the individual is prepared to spend time discussing and elaborating, are the values which underly that area. Consider the skeleton map in Figure 3.7. Concept 1 is identified on the above criteria as a pointer towards an area of interest, this is called a key concept. Of interest is the cognitive structure which explains or elaborates that key concept. This structure can be identified simply by tracing back through the map and picking out all concepts which directly or indirectly explain or lead to that concept. So for example in Figure 3.7 concepts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 form the explanatory structure for concept 1. If in the process of tracing back another key concept is reached then the set of concepts explaining the new key concept form a sub-group to the original key concept. The map can thus be divided into a hierarchical structure of interacting groups. These groups represent 'matters of interest to the individual', and as such are indicative of values that the individual holds.

The computer analysis was performed as follows: Category (a) is determined by an inspection of all the end points of the model (called heads), category (b) is provided by a centrality analysis which gives a count of all the direct links for each concept. Category (c) which is provided by a Path analysis which gives a count of all the different chains of argument leading to and leading from each concept. Category (d) is provided by a Trace analysis which gives a count of all the concepts which directly or indirectly affect or are affected by a given concept. In effect category (d) is a count of all the concepts on the chains of argument discovered in a Path analysis. In categories (b-c) the top 10% only were considered. A

composite list was then constructed of key concepts. Key concepts were taken to be any concept that appeared in at least two of the categories (a-d) above. There was also a visual inspection of the final list and concepts which were judged significant but did not fall into the above criteria were also included. This visual check is very important since the analyses can only act as guide. For example some concepts can occur on both a trace and path analysis where they are part of a chain of concepts, in this case it is unnecessary to include both as key concepts, and the concept which is a consequence of the other is taken as the key concept.

This produced a list of 9 key concepts which were then used as the basis for an automatic grouping procedure as described above. The names of the groups were taken as the key concept descriptions. The resulting 'areas of interest' hierarchy is shown in Figure 3.8.

Figure 3.7 Skeleton map

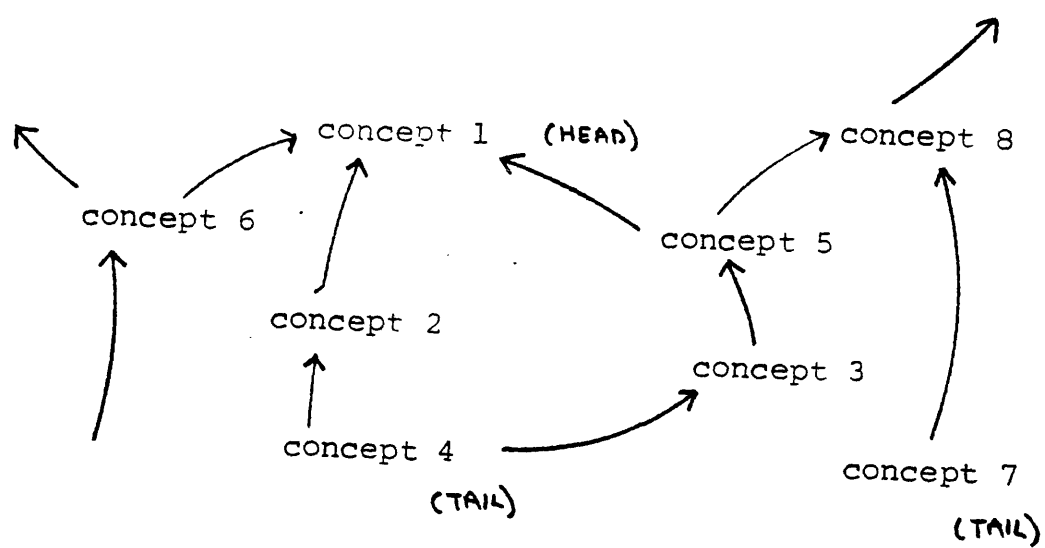


Figure 3.8      Group hierarchy for Crossman

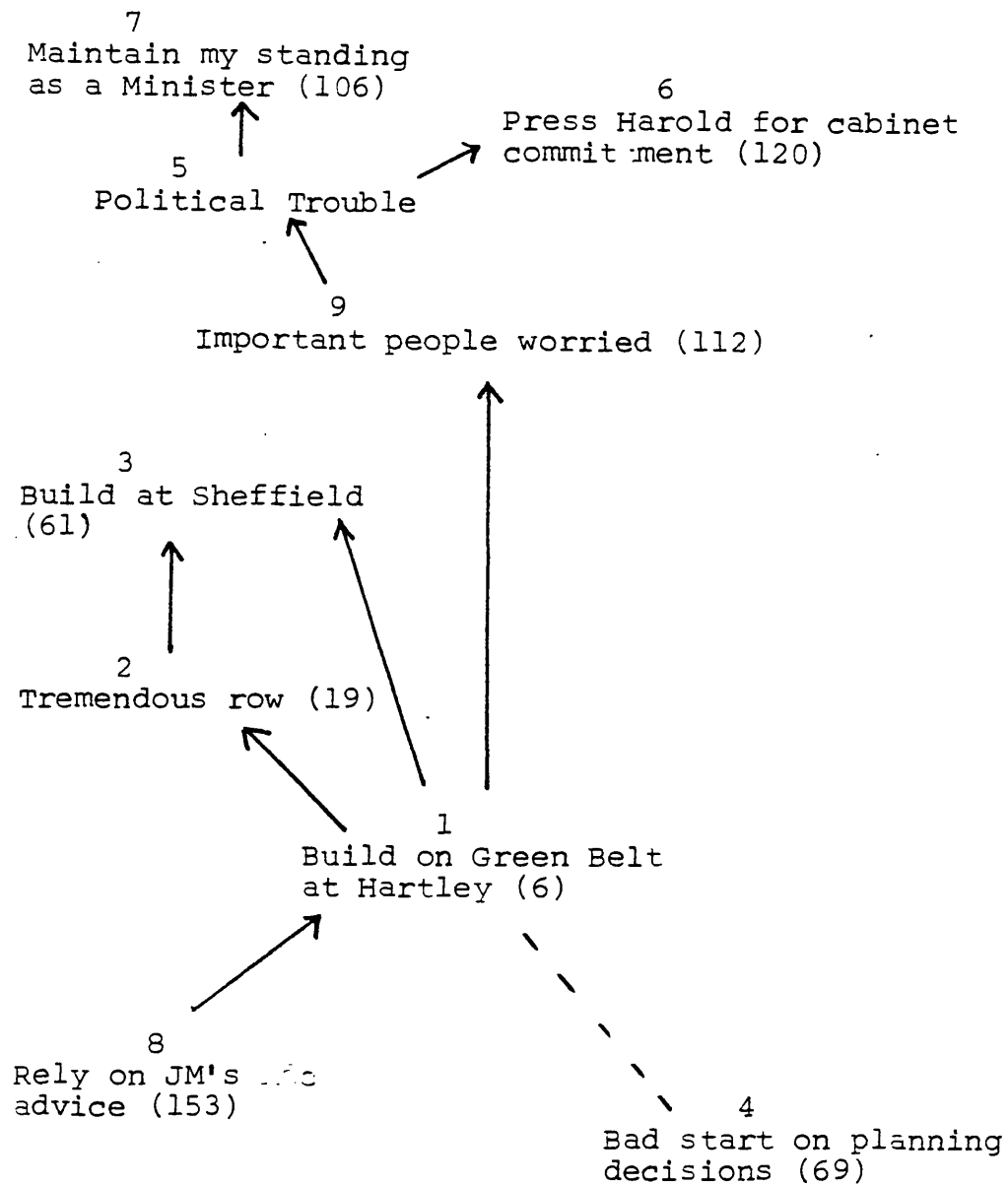


Figure 3.9 Key concepts and analysis

Cognitive centrality analysis  
Forward and Backward search  
For complete model  
Result highlights  
-----

There are a lot of statements immediately  
associated with these concepts

No	Concept		In	Out	Kon	Total
6	BUILD ON GREEN BELT LAND AT HARTLEY .... DO	6	: 7	3	0	10
19	TREMENDOUS ROW ....	19	: 7	1	0	8
36	MINISTER GOES .... MINISTER DOES NOT GO	36	: 5	1	0	6
61	BUILD .... DO NOT BUILD AT SHEFFIELD	61	: 6	0	0	6
75	DECISION GOES DOWN BADLY .... DECISION GOES	75	: 2	4	0	6
8	DO NOT BUILD ON GREEN BELT .... BUILD ON GRE	8	: 4	1	0	5
11	NEED TO COPE WITH LARGE LONDON POP ....	11	: 0	5	0	5
50	PLANNING DECISION QUITE DELIBERATELY MADE ..	50	: 2	2	1	5
68	MISTAKEN .... CORRECT DECISION	68	: 3	2	0	5
99	HOLD .... DO NOT HOLD CAREFUL PRESS CONFEREN	99	: 2	2	1	5
115	POLITICAL TROUBLE	115	: 3	2	0	5
139	DEFUSE HARTLEY .... HARTLEY GOES ON	139	: 4	1	0	5
21	GREEN BELT IS NOT REALLY GREEN ....	21	: 2	2	0	4
26	LOCAL MPS NOT CONSULTED .... LOCAL MPS CONSU	26	: 1	2	1	4
28	JM PUT HIS FOOT IN IT ....	28	: 1	3	0	4
49	BELT NOT INVIOLEATE .... BELT INVIOLEATE	49	: 3	1	0	4
69	BAD .... GOOD START ON PLANNING DECISONS	69	: 1	0	3	4
106	MAINTAIN .... LESSEN MY STANDING AS A MINIST	106	: 3	0	1	4
127	PUT HARTLEY BEHIND US ....	127	: 3	1	0	4
153	RELY ON JM'S ADVICE .... RELY ON OWN ADVICE	153	: 1	3	0	4

Path analysis  
Forward and Backward search  
For complete model  
Result highlights  
-----

A large number of chains of argument are associated  
with these concepts

No	Concept		In	Out	Kon	Total
61	BUILD .... DO NOT BUILD AT SHEFFIELD	61	: 62	0	0	62
19	TREMENDOUS ROW ....	19	: 32	1	0	33
106	MAINTAIN .... LESSEN MY STANDING AS A MINIST	106	: 33	0	0	33
153	RELY ON JM'S ADVICE .... RELY ON OWN ADVICE	153	: 1	31	0	32
115	POLITICAL TROUBLE	115	: 28	3	0	31
152	I DO NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT PLANNING ....	152	: 0	31	0	31
114	INVOLVE HAROLD .... DO NOT INVOLVE HAROLD	114	: 28	2	0	30
119	HAROLD MAY DESERT ME ....	119	: 28	1	0	29
68	MISTAKEN .... CORRECT DECISION	68	: 26	2	0	28
116	COMPROMISE ON APPOINTMENT OF PERMAMENT SECRE	116	: 28	0	0	28
120	PRESS HAROLD FOR CABINET COMMITTMENT .... DO	120	: 28	0	0	28
6	BUILD ON GREEN BELT LAND AT HARTLEY .... DO	6	: 21	6	0	27
69	BAD .... GOOD START ON PLANNING DECISONS	69	: 26	0	0	26
73	BEING A MINISTER ....	73	: 0	24	0	24
112	IMPORTANT PEOPLE WORRIED .... IMPORTANT PEOP	112	: 21	3	0	24

Figure 3.9 (continued)

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Trace analysis

Forward and Backward search

For complete model

Result highlights  
-----

These concepts are affected by or can affect  
a lot of other concepts in the model

No	Concept		In	Out	Kon	Total
61	BUILD .... DO NOT BUILD AT SHEFFIELD	61	: 62	0	0	62
106	MAINTAIN .... LESSEN MY STANDING AS A MINIST	106	: 60	0	0	60
19	TREMENDOUS ROW ....	19	: 51	1	0	52
115	POLITICAL TROUBLE	115	: 46	5	0	51
114	INVOLVE HAROLD .... DO NOT INVOLVE HAROLD	114	: 47	3	0	50
119	HAROLD MAY DESERT ME ....	119	: 48	1	0	49
120	PRESS HAROLD FOR CABINET COMMIT MENT .... DO	120	: 49	0	0	49
116	COMPROMISE ON APPOINTMENT OF PERMAMENT SECRE	116	: 48	0	0	48
6	BUILD ON GREEN BELT LAND AT HARTLEY .... DO	6	: 32	12	0	44
68	MISTAKEN .... CORRECT DECISION	68	: 42	2	0	44
69	BAD .... GOOD START ON PLANNING DECISIONS	69	: 43	0	0	43
112	IMPORTANT PEOPLE WORRIED .... IMPORTANT PEOP	112	: 33	6	0	39
18	PUBLIC CONSTERNATION	18	: 33	2	0	35
152	I DO NOT KNOW MUCH ABOUT PLANNING ....	152	: 0	25	0	25
153	RELY ON JM'S ADVICE .... RELY ON OWN ADVICE	153	: 1	24	0	25

#### HEADS

27	PREVENT BIRMINGHAM SPRAWL OUT TO REDDITCH . . . CREATE SPRAWL TO REDDITCH
29	[+]CONFIDENCE IN JM . . . . . [-]CONFIDENCE IN JM
60	DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH SPECIAL CASE IN LARGE COMMITTEE. . [not]DIFFICULT TO
61	BUILD . . . . . .DO NOT BUILD: AT SHEFFIELD
69	BAD . . . . . .GOOD: START ON PLANNING DECISIONS
78	[+]NEED FOR OVERSPILL ESTATES . . . . . [-]NEED FOR OVERSPILL ESTATES
79	[+]POPULARITY OF MINISTER . . . . . [-]POPULARITY OF MINISTER
80	NEED TO REFLECT ON HARTLEY ISSUE . . . . . .FORGET
106	MAINTAIN. . . . . LESSEN: MY STANDING AS A MINISTER
109	JM IS TERRIBLE COWARD . . . . . [not]JM IS TERRIBLE COWARD
116	COMPROMISE ON APPOINTMENT OF PERMAMENT SECRETARY. . [not]COMPROMISE ON APPO
120	PRESS HAROLD FOR CABINET COMMIT MENT . . . . . DO NOT PRESS FOR CAB COMM
130	IVE GOT ANOTHER HARTLEY . . . . . [not]IVE GOT ANOTHER HARTLEY
132	DO. . . . . .DO NOT: TRUST DEPT
136	DECISION WAS RIGHT . . . . . [not]DECISION WAS RIGHT
146	[+]CONFIDENCE IN BM . . . . . [-]CONFIDENCE IN BM
147	RE-ESTABLISH PUBLIC OPINION OF ME . .[not]RE-ESTABLISH PUBLIC OPINION OF ME
150	NEED. . . . . DO NOT NEED: TO DEVELOP PLANNING POLICY



The value framework behind the Hartley arguments.

The existence towards the top of the hierarchy of values related to Crossman's political career illustrate the wider context in which he viewed Hartley towards the end of the affair. The predominance of these values over sub-ordinate values on planning explains why planning issues are much less to the fore in Crossman's arguments in the later stages. In this hierarchy arguments to do with planning are less important because they affect sub-ordinate values. This would suggest that the position of a value in the value hierarchy will influence the persuasiveness of an argument which is seen to relate to that value. Thus sub-ordinate arguments, as defined in this context of the hierarchy of values, will be less attended to and arguments related to them less persuasive. This echoes Boulding's suggestion (1966), that there is a link in decision making between the position of values in the value hierarchy and the decisions taken.

In this light the concentration on planning issues at the start of the affair requires explanation. Within the political values are concepts which express (as the earlier description of the issue also showed) a concern by Crossman with 'being a Minister', part of which reflected a concern with taking decisions in a particular way. For instance the concept 'Planning decision quite deliberately made', which is part of the group of concepts on the Hartley decision, reflects a felt need to make decisions in a deliberate and definite way based on available evidence. For Crossman the decision involved evaluating arguments and then deciding, which is the course he followed for Hartley. At that stage he did not seem to appreciate the full consequences for his political values of this decision. Note

also that in explaining the Hartley decision there is a group concerned with concepts around 'Rely on JM's advice', which illustrates the influence of Crossman's advisors. The prominence of these other values (in terms of Crossman's interests at the time) seems to have precluded most of the arguments (which were later used by opponents) which linked the Hartley decision to other political factors. In this case Crossman's interpretation of the situation was that it did not affect other (more important) political values, and so could be decided without reference to these values.

The issues of personal political standing form a significant part of the map, and Crossman's strategies reflect this concern, for example he eventually blames the 'outcry' on political mismanagement rather than Hartley being a bad planning decision, and the arguments he uses are geared to defusing the issue in political terms. Perhaps the most interesting feature of following the issue through the pages of the diary is the way in which as the situation escalates, different 'areas of interest' come into picture. So that the final map represents a very complex picture of the interaction of Planning, Departmental, and Governmental politics, which forms a template for the later decisions, so that on being presented with a planning decision some months later Crossman was able to say "I've got another Hartley". The separate maps highlight the development of a decision template, and the group map represents a relatively stable final form of that template which can be used in other similar situations (Hansen, Heitger and McKell (1978). The predictive value of the final template can be quite significant in that it provides, for similar issues, some idea of the factors which Crossman will attempt to

assess or need information on. The balance of the map between the substantive planning issues and personal political issues is quite striking and may be quite different for someone who had a greater interest in housing issues. It might be different again for Crossman himself when tackling issues of social security in which he had a much longer term interest.

#### The development of cognitive systems

This section looks more closely at the way in which the final template described above developed, and thereby discusses some of the issues raised in Chapter 2 about development and change in cognitive systems. Also it attempts to explain further why Crossman was susceptible to the early arguments of his planning advisors.

Comparison of the early cognitive maps, and the subsequent maps from January 1965 onwards, illustrates the way in which the Hartley issue was perceived by Crossman to relate to many more areas of interest than he originally imagined it would. It is also a more complex view, in that meanings of concepts have been elaborated and there are more links between concepts. Crossman's original prediction that Hartley was a correct decision (and, because of that, that he could weather any possible political storms that may arise) was found, as events unfolded, to be inaccurate. Under the influence of these pressures his decision template to deal with planning issues gradually developed. It is interesting to note that, in the rest of his career as Minister of Housing, although there were a number of similar planning decisions to make, none produced a political row of the same order as the Hartley decision. What is most significant in terms of

persuasive argument is why Crossman was persuaded by MacColl and Jimmy James to take a position which caused so much difficulty for him.

Most relevant here seems to be Burnstein and Vinkour's theory of novel argumentation (Vinkour and Burnstein 1974, Burnstein 1975), and Axelrod's view of novel arguments in foreign policy settings (Axelrod 1979). Vinkour and Burnstein suggest that to be persuasive an argument must be perceived to be valid by the target (the person who is being persuaded), and not already known and taken into account by the target. The previous analysis has already suggested that Crossman, through his background, had very little knowledge of the detail of planning arguments, and this suggests one reason why he found the arguments persuasive. They would also carry with them a certain authority of expertise, as both arguers were recognised by Crossman to be knowledgeable on planning matters. The notion of novel arguments is supported by Axelrod's work on foreign policy decision making, which studied using cognitive maps the verbatim discussion of high level policy groups, and by work with small groups by Vinkour and Burnstein. What may be happening is that targets do not have the necessary elaborated construct system to reject a novel argument when it is initially presented. It is thus persuasive through the absence of valid counter arguments. A not dissimilar phenomena has been reported with work on mock juries, where jurors were sometimes assessing situations which were very different from their everyday experience (Walker 1975).

Argument and debate

This chapter has concentrated upon looking at Crossman's view of the issue, and the way in which values form an important part of understanding the arguments that he found persuasive, and his change in argument strategy as the issue was perceived to affect other and more important values. Proponents of a strictly rational view of decision making would find much of the debate and discussion of Hartley incomprehensible, since it has much more to do with Crossman's interpretation of events with himself at the centre than with housing issues. This illustrates though only one half of the proposed nature of argument from Chapter 2, namely that of values. The following chapter looks at Hartley as a public debate, and in particular at the arguments containing a charge of inconsistency, which Crossman himself considered to be very damaging to his case.

### Summary of Chapter 3

#### Argument and valuing

The theories and methods developed in chapters 1 and 2 were used to explore the first research setting for the study of argument. It was argued that personal diaries provided that they genuinely reflect the thoughts of the writer, are a useful way of following the course of an issue in terms of the arguments involved. This is primarily because they are not written for a particular audience, and are written in the knowledge that they will only be available years after the events they record.

The decision to allow building on green belt land at Hartley in Kent was chosen because it is possible to follow Crossman's arguments and reactions to others' arguments through the development of a major political row. In the early stages the planning arguments put forward by Crossman's advisors are regarded by Crossman as persuasive, but in the later stages of the affair Crossman's opponents are able to establish a strong case against the decision. The cognitive maps drawn to cover the separate stages of the issue are shown, and form the basis for the analysis of the arguments.

One especially helpful perspective in explaining Crossman's arguments and later strategies is that of the values that Crossman holds. The subject of values is a vast and complex one, and the meaning attached to 'values' varies considerably from generalized human needs to the specific motivations of individuals. In this context an operational definition of values is attempted which links them to the explanatory structure around 'key' concepts in a cognitive map. Key concepts are

identified by looking at the relationship of the concept to the rest of the cognitive map and assessing the significance of that concept in making sense of the whole map. The computer package COPE was used to assist in the analysis and thus enabled a greater volume of data to be considered than might otherwise have been possible.

The analysis of the arguments within a valuing perspective provided explanations of events which otherwise seemed suprising. For example, Crossman's initial decision to allow building on green belt land at Hartley seemed odd when the political consequences were so serious, and he had initially been against building on green belt land in principle. The analysis of values revealed that Crossman was concerned at the time with the process of 'being a Minister'. The values that predominated at this stage were concerned with how ministerial decisions should be made. The influence of these values and Crossman's felt lack of experience on housing issues made him susceptible to the arguments of his advisors, and explain his adoption of those arguments.

The adoption of those arguments and their relation to other aspects of Crossman's cognitive system, provides the basis for the Hartley issue to become a damaging public debate. These latter issues are discussed fully in Chapter 4.

The later stages of the issue show the development of a more useful (for Crossman) set of guidelines (decision template) which can be used to evaluate similar planning issues. This template protects important political values. So Crossman can say on a later issue 'I've got another Hartley', and then act accordingly.

This chapter has concentrated upon the interaction between values and the persuasiveness of argument. It presents a more subtle picture of influence than the sub-ordination of reason to self-interest that is often argued in this context. It suggests rather that the relevance of particular arguments is assessed by the individual in relation to the values that he feels are affected by the argument. The persuasiveness of argument is thus linked to the position of the values that the argument affects in the individual's value hierarchy.



Appendix to chapter 3 - Principal references to Hartley in Crossman Diaries, Volume 1.

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- 32 - initial opinions
- 85-86 - change of mind on Hartley
- 87 - views on green belt generally
- 93 - meeting with Kent M.P.'s
- 113-115 - reflections on Hartley
- 119 - discussion with George Wigg
- 120-121 - meeting with Harold Wilson
- 123 - press conference on green belt
- 130 - conference on green belt
- 143 - Hartley causes embarrassment
- 178 - bombarded with abuse on Hartley at London Labour Party
- 560 - Lea Valley
- 622 - I've learnt my lesson from Hartley

Other matters

- 12-15 - introduction to writing of Diaries
- 19 - summary of political scene in October 1964
- 67,85,99 - reflections on Ministerial life

## CHAPTER 4

### ARGUMENT AND DEBATE

#### Introduction

Chapter 3 discussed the relationship between argument and values and explored the ways in which one individual (Richard Crossman) tackled arguments over an important issue (Hartley planning decision). This perspective enabled an analysis of the events in terms of individual values and provided an explanatory structure for Crossman's actions and arguments. However there was more than one person involved in the Hartley debate, and this chapter explores the wider public debate of the Hartley issue in terms of the arguments used. Information on the public debate is taken from the debate in the House of Lords, and the popular press. The picture of the alternative arguments is less detailed than that provided by the Diaries, nonetheless the data does provide insights into different arguments, and to the different types of argumentative attack that were made on Crossman. As in Chapter 3 the emphasis will still be upon Crossman's interpretation of events, since the purpose of these chapters is to develop useful techniques and theories for analysing argument, and not to provide a detailed analytical history of the Hartley planning decision. Of particular interest are the attacks which Crossman took most seriously (as judged by his attempts to provide counter argument), and why he considers these to be more damaging than others.

In Chapter 2 the following theoretical statements were put forward as a potential means of analysing arguments between individuals:

a) To what extent do arguers play a social role in respect of each other?

- b) What commonality do arguers perceive between their different construing of the debate?
- c) To what extent do arguer and audience perceive their construing of an event to be supported by other people?

These are by no means mutually exclusive categories, but each emphasizes a feature of argument and consequently has explanatory power. These statements are applied to the arguments of the Hartley debate in the following sections, and provide further answers to the questions posed about the Hartley issue in chapter 3. In particular:

- d) Why was Crossman so suprised by the strength of the support for the case against Hartley?
- e) Why did he choose to defuse Hartley rather than to defend it?

In addition:

- f) Why were the arguments of the opponents able to maintain a serious challenge to the decision over a number of months?

### Sociality and argument

Chapter 2 argued that the ability of arguers to play a social role with respect to each other, that is, to understand each other's view in an argument, significantly affects the nature of the debate between them. Reading the diary on the Hartley issue there is a phase in January and February when the debate was at a public climax, at which time Crossman's feeling of a lack of control, almost of panic, is evident. At this stage he resorts to his most serious attempts to protect himself from potentially damaging consequences, for example by discussing the affair directly with Harold Wilson. The Diary after that meeting probably reflects Crossman's darkest

mood in the Hartley affair, since Wilson's response has been at best ambiguous. There is here a sense that the decision may have been a sufficiently serious blunder to blight his future career. How was it possible for the debate to reach this damaging and emotive level, how could an apparently astute politician so seriously mis-judge a situation?

In the Diary Crossman admits that the 'storm of protest' was unexpected (see also chapter 3) and that he had completely underestimated the emotive appeal of 'green belt' to certain sections of the community, especially in the South East. The amenity lobby as it was termed by Lord Chorley in the House of Lords Debate (Hansard, (Lords) 1964). Lord Chorley went on to suggest that opinion was hardening within the government against these interests (Times, 22nd December 1964). There was a very different construal around the term 'green belt' for Crossman as compared with this group. Chapter 3 has already shown that green belt was considered by Crossman to be in the realm of planning decisions, and not of particularly close personal interest. For instance his initial support of the arguments of the 'amenity value of green belt', are overturned during a 2 hour car journey. His new view was quoted in the Times newspaper, as:

"I am convinced that green belt policy around London can be preserved only by concentrating building in a few selected new sites and by stopping the dribs and drabs of development all over the place - the sort of infilling and rounding off which in this part of Kent has destroyed so much amenity."

(Times, 13th January 1965)

Crossman clearly expected that others who initially valued green belt as an amenity, would be persuaded to this later modified view. What Crossman seems to have mistaken is that for others the 'amenity

argument' may be more closely linked to other important personal values, and therefore as Kelly predicts less easily changed. The anger of letters in the Times Newspaper (Times, 13th, 21st January 1965) reflects this different construal of green belt, where Crossman's new argument is not seen as a way of truly preserving green belt but as a flagrant destruction of it.

Also as noted earlier this lobby, which is never particularly well defined, is able to mobilize support in the House of Lords to put forward its arguments in the debate. It is significant that the lobby is not a defined pressure group but a series of individuals all attacking an 'erosion of green belt'. This suggests that Crossman is also arguing against a common theme which stands for certain generalized ideals, which a wide variety of individuals can in some way identify with. Moreover it is a theme which is still strongly present 20 years later, as a comment in the Sunday Times on fears about Conservative Government plans on green belt in 1984 illustrates. Apparently the Environment Secretary Patrick Jenkin is expecting a 'rough ride' from M.P.'s, local councils, and environmental groups, by accepting that 'some (Green Belts) were no longer worth preserving .... the effect would be to strengthen protection elsewhere' (Sunday Times, 13th November 1983). In a public debate of this sort these influences can be dramatic. Discussion of themes is reserved for a later section in this chapter.

What is revealed here is that Crossman seriously lost control of the debate by being unable to make sense of some of his opponents. That is, make sense of in a way that would enable him to predict their

actions and the nature and force of the argument that they would bring to bear. This lack of control has arisen from Crossman being unable to play a social role in respect of significant actors in a situation. Crossman clearly thought that the decision would be unpopular, but he was equally sure that his new amenity argument would win the day: in the event it was never seriously debated.

Political life is plagued by mis-judgements of this sort, and Crossman's mis-construal of potential opponents should not be overestimated as a blunder, and indeed there were other factors which contributed to the 'storm of protest', as described later in this chapter. Chapter 3 suggests though that Crossman constructed this decision in relation to his own values and concerns at the time, and his arguments were geared to persuade himself, and not others. The Sociality corollary implies much more than being able to follow the logic or argumentative structure of an argument, it also suggests that there is a need to place that argument within the wider picture of the audience's (potential opponents) construal. Such an idea is not new in the study of argumentation, and is described by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), as 'audience centred' argument.

Aristotle similarly advocated appeals to the audience (Encyclopaedia Britannica 1952), but was criticized by Plato in the *Gorgias* (Campbell 1980, Hamilton 1960) that such an approach appealed only to the self-interest of the individuals in the audience, and that they had not been won over by argument at all. Later Sophists (who were professional teachers of the skill of debate), were similarly criticized as 'tricksters'. More recently the theory of cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1961) investigated the effect of inducement

(direct appeals to self-interest) on persuasion, and came to a similar view of inducement. Larger monetary awards were more effective than smaller ones in encouraging participants to support a particular view or action which they originally did not support. But later interviews found that those who had received smaller rewards were more likely to have genuinely changed their minds. Those in receipt of larger rewards were able to explain their actions by 'I did it for the money'. A direct appeal to values, which is sometimes advocated in audience centred approaches, seems unlikely therefore to be argumentatively persuasive as understood in this thesis. The audience may be pre-disposed by their values to listen to one argument rather than another, but they also need to be able accept the reasons for that argument within their current construal. The new argument, to be accepted, must be able to coherently link with their current thinking on the issue (Rokeach and Rothman 1965).

The issue raised by Plato, and in more recent research, is really a debate about the nature of argument. What is involved in persuading others? The notion of sociality implies that argument involves systems of personal constructs, and those systems consist of values and beliefs, expressed as a network of theories to make sense of the world. Persuading someone in this sense must mean them incorporating within their system new theories, or re-arranging links. This is much more than is implied by the usual description of audience centred research, which seems to imply an appeal to values directly, rather than an understanding of the other's construct system. In addition the understanding of the 'audience' supposedly required for audience centred argument is very often restricted either to an

awareness of generalized human traits, or of the broad needs of the audience as a group with a particular interest. Chapter 3 suggested that the Sociality corollary implies that understanding another's construal is a more careful and detailed process than these 'broad brush' approaches. It seems likely that Crossman made a similar mistake in taking too broad a view of the amenity opponents. He seems to have argued that that his 'new' amenity argument would eventually appeal to them because he was attempting to 'really' preserve the amenity value of the countryside by focussing on those parts of the green belt which were unspoilt. But if green belt is symbol not only for preserving the countryside from urban encroachment, but also for preserving other values associated with this, then Crossman's argument may be seen as an attack on these other values. The existence of a symbol implies a linked set of values underlying that symbol, and thus an attack on the symbol itself may meet with considerable resistance. Crossman did not make any real contact with the construal of the amenity lobby opponents. If through the use of cognitive mapping Crossman (or his advisors) had been able to capture in detail the thinking and arguments of just one of the amenity lobby opponents then he may have produced a very different argument to support Hartley.

Nelkin showed in a series of reports of public inquiries and debate how the lack of knowledge of the opponent's construct system (view of the world), leads to impasse in the argument, and very often to a lack of control by one party or the other on the course of debate. A lack of knowledge which is usually characterized by generalized assumptions about opponents' motives and actions (Nelkin 1979, Wynne



1982).

### Commonality and argument

The essence of playing a social role in respect of someone else is the ability to construe their construal, which as the preceeding section described involves much more than assuming that individuals hold particular general values. Once however an arguer has in some way adequately construed another's view of the world in relation to a specific argument, there is still a process of interacting with and changing that other's construal, so that he may be persuaded to a different point of view. The discussion between Crossman, Jim MacColl and Jimmy James comes into this category, in which Crossman is persuaded to change his mind, and support the 'new' amenity argument. Arguments within this context fall more often into the realm of rational debate as it has been described in Chapter 1. In this context arguments are often presented by each arguer as being arguments about an objective world, for example, 'it is so that much green belt land is already spoilt'. If arguers accept this background to the debate then they are placed in the position of being right or wrong, and propositions are there to be proved or disproved. A series of arguments presented by the Chairman of Dartford Rural District Council (Leslie Reeves) illustrate argument as a debate about an objective world.

The sure and certain 'fact' of Britain in 1964-65 was the much debated growth in the population, often termed the population explosion. Crossman always presents this as an objective fact (see also Chapter 3), and indeed the Labour government had been elected

only a short while previously on a promise to create a Land Commission to deal with the problem of making land available for house building. The cognitive maps in Chapter 3, and the map of Crossman's values show that the population explosion was the starting point of many of the chains of argument. An attempt to dispute this fact would then seriously threaten much of Crossman's argumentative structure, and indeed have wider ramifications for the Labour Party. Such an attack was attempted by Leslie Reeves (Times, 30th November 1964, 21st January 1965). He argued that the South East Study, on which the population figures were based, was mistaken in its assumptions, and had moreover been questioned by the government itself. In effect it is an attempt to remove a concept from Crossman's cognitive map. Or rather it can be seen that Crossman's construal was as a single pole concept:

[POPULATION EXPLOSION]

whereas Reeves construed the possibility of change in:

[POPULATION EXPLOSION PREDICTION CORRECT .... POPULATION EXPLOSION  
NOT PROVED]

In one case the concept has a taken for granted quality in the other there exists the possibility of change. However, this argument does not appear to have publicly had any impact, nor does Crossman mention it. Reeves is challenging a concept which has become a public theme, that is, it is similarly construed by large numbers of people, and consequently has become part of a 'sure and certain' social life. Such themes are consequently difficult to challenge.

Another aspect on which Crossman and Councillor Reeves differently

construe the Hartley issue, is over their construal of the basic decision. Reeves and others (for instance Lord Connesford in the House of Lords debate) argued at some length that, even if Crossman's premise of the need to build to relieve the population pressure was accepted, Hartley was a very poor site. Poor sewage facilities and poor commuter links to London at Hartley made it a difficult site and there were others much better suited for the development (Times, 22nd December 1964). Reeves' construal in this context seems to imply a construct like:

[BUILD AT HARTLEY .... BUILD ELSEWHERE]

whereas the concepts discussed in Chapter 3 suggest that Crossman saw the issue more in terms of constructs like:

[BUILD AT HARTLEY .... DO NOT BUILD AT HARTLEY]

Crossman's construal is interesting in this context since it excludes from his arguments, any discussion about the suitability of Hartley as a site, other than in terms of its proximity to London, and the availability of land there. For Crossman 'not building at Hartley' seems to have represented a failure to tackle the population problem.

### Facts and themes

The established nature, in 1964, of the notion of 'the population explosion' and the need to 'do something about it', is an interesting example of what Holton describes as a theme (Holton 1973). It is an understanding of the social world which has almost assumed the status of a fact. Whilst through our everyday experience we are familiar

with physical objects as being taken-for-granted this is perhaps less explicit with cognitive aspects of experience. Yet our mental landscape contains many such basic assumptions and general rules derived (not necessarily consciously) from our interaction with society. The important aspect of social facts is that they have a high degree of commonality between construct systems, that is, they are events which are similarly construed (similarly experienced) across individuals. Challenging such aspects of a cognitive system will, Kelly suggests, provoke considerable resistance since these constructs impinge upon a wide range of other constructs, and may imply significant changes in the whole system.

At the level of public debate these social facts become influential because they are often the only constructs that individuals removed from the detailed consideration of the issue under debate have for assessing the arguments. A good example of this reliance of public argument on general themes is shown by the argument put forward in the House of Lords debate by Lord Molson. He argued against the Hartley decision by saying:

"I have known the Minister of Housing for many years. He is known in the Labour Party as a left-winger. He probably got on the Labour Party Executive because he was known as a left winger. I am sorry that my old friend Dick Crossman has changed. I should be pained and hurt if he now switches round to the right and becomes one of the reactionaries who advocates private enterprise speculative building development at the expense of green belt."

(Hansard, 21st December 1964)

The analysis of the Diaries showed that the concepts around [SELL OUT TO PRIVATE SECTOR] were considered important to Crosssman, so despite the flowery nature of the rhetoric, this was a damaging attack. But

the effectiveness of this argument relies upon the audience for it having a particular view (at the level of a theme), about what left wing politicians believe. It also relies upon a significant number of people having some commonality through this theme. A U.K. reader of the above sentence may be tempted to suggest that such a statement is so obvious as to be not worthy of attention. This more than anything illustrates the taken-for-granted nature of social facts.

In one sense it can be seen as a mistaken social fact, since Crossman himself expressed the view that his actions on Hartley were in accord with his own views and with socialist policy. He considered it to be nonetheless a damaging argument, probably because he believed that others would construe his actions in a similar way to Lord Molson.

In relation to argument these themes which litter the social landscape act to support some arguments rather than others. Their generality across large groups of people make them difficult to challenge, and impose constraints in much the same way that physical facts constrain scientific argument. Crossman recognized that the contradiction between his new amenity argument and the social facts ascribed to Labour Party politicians could be seriously damaging, and it was these challenges that he concentrated on. The element of inconsistency is a very important part of these arguments and is considered in more detail in the following section.

#### The problem of inconsistency

Before looking at the Hartley example in detail the following section illustrates some other charges of inconsistency, taken from a short informal study of academic debates at the University of Bath by the

author.

1) A frequent charge is that of inconsistency with others' (established) views. This is linked to a belief in the growth of knowledge as an iterative and convergent process. For science these ideas have been explored in depth by Holton and Kuhn; of interest in the context of argument however is the psychological need for a consistent explanatory chain if arguments are to be accepted (Kuhn 1962, Routley 1975).

2) Another charge of inconsistency, is that of inconsistency with the 'facts', often in the form of "but surely what really happened is.....". There is an assumption here that someone is in a position to know what the facts were or that the facts can be unambiguously established. There seems to be a psychological need to understand events in a unique way.

3) A charge of internal inconsistency was also common, in which case the link between a current statement and what the arguer has previously stated is challenged. There seems to be a demand for the arguer's knowledge to be self-consistent.

The interesting aspect of all such charges is in their psychological effect. A charge of inconsistency demands a response, and must be counteracted if the argument is not to be discredited. Most people have experienced the personal emotions of having this sort of attack made on their arguments, and of the difficulty of maintaining the respect and credibility of the audience if such challenges are not adequately met. Singer (1968) refers to this as the 'bothersomeness' of

inconsistency. From this informal survey and from the data in this thesis charges of inconsistency seem to evoke personal discomfort at being seen to have a 'flawed' argument; destroy the credibility of the argument for the audience; demand immediate response. Powerful argument and consistency are therefore importantly linked, inconsistency is always a problem for persuasive argument.

### Understanding inconsistency

The charges of inconsistency against Crossman stemmed from a number of aspects of the Hartley debate:

- a) Lord Molson's argument (above) stressed the failure of Crossman to protect green belt land, and the acceptance by a Labour Minister of a private firm to build the village.
- b) The involvement of a private firm was particularly questioned because the Government had previously turned down an application by the Local Authority to build at the same location.
- c) Lord Molson emphasized the inconsistency in Government policy generally:

"This decision was so flagrantly and deliberately in defiance of existing case law that it seemed to imply in spite of the Minister's denial in the Commons a change of policy over the proposed green belt for London."

(Hansard, 21st December 1964)

- d) The decision was also widely interpreted as contrary to Labour Party policy, for example Anthony Crosland had expressed Party Policy; only a few months before, as:

"only by the return of a Labour Government would what was left the green belts be saved....."

(Times, 30th November 1964)

Chapter 2 has already pointed out that the notion of consistency when used in a general sense creates difficulties in interpretation, since what may be seen as consistent for one person may be inconsistent for

another. To understand consistency Kelly argues, it is necessary to use it as a construct, that is as a means of differentiating one aspect of experience from another (Kelly 1963). So for each individual 'consistency .... inconsistency' will be with respect to something. Consistency is therefore a property of individual construct systems and is the basis of their predictive or anticipatory power. Inconsistency is always a threat to man viewed as a Kellian scientist since it robs him of his ability to make sense of experience, other than as unconnected events. The degree of this threat varies, and will depend upon the relation between the parts of the system which are seen as inconsistent with each other, and the range of experience that the rules under threat cover, what Kelly refers to as the ranges of convenience of particular constructs. Kelly also supposes that an individual construct system is not necessarily completely internally consistent, and that the system, as a hierarchical system, will be fragmented into different subsystems. Consistency between subsystems does not always exist. For example, beliefs about one part of experience may not be consistent with another, but if these parts of the construct system are rarely brought into direct juxtaposition then the inconsistencies will not be attended to by the individual. Kelly argues that this is a defensive mechanism since the variety of experience would, unless the system is partitioned in some way, render an individual unable to act. Only at the highest level of the system is consistency the rule since this holds all the subsystems together and guarantees the integrity of the individual as he construes himself. These arguments are covered by the Fragmentation corollary:



"A person may successively employ a variety of construction subsystems which are inferentially incompatible with each other."  
(Kelly 1955)

The charge by others, in argument, of inconsistency is a suggestion that they are unable to make sense of the arguer's construal. Whilst, as with Crossman, the arguer himself does not consider his arguments to contain an inconsistency, he may perceive that others do construe it as inconsistent. There is a danger that the arguer and audience are unable to play a social role with respect to this inconsistency. The inability to enter into a social role with someone, to be unable to make sense of their views, leads to a need to re-construe their actions so that they do make sense. This was the line of argument attempted by Lord Molson. His suggested re-construal was that Crossman's original left wing views had changed, and his actions on Hartley were consistent with this change of view. The arguments over Hartley show both the resolution of inconsistency at a personal level and the resolution of inconsistency at a social level. The following sections look at these in more detail.

### Resolving inconsistency

In the very early stages of the Hartley decision, there is within Crossman's thinking around the issue, an inconsistency between his belief in the need to maintain green belt land and preserve its amenity value, and the need to build at Hartley. In some ways they can be viewed as two subsystems within his construct system which have been brought into a mental juxtaposition by his appointment as Minister of Housing. His original argument coped with this

inconsistency by giving prominence to the preservation of green belt over the need to cope with the population explosion.

Crossman's change of mind, to build at Hartley, brings this inconsistency back into focus. The inconsistency is resolved by re-construing the meaning of the construct green-belt, so that it now refers to 'true' green belt land which still has amenity value, and other green belt land which is already spoilt. The inconsistency is for him now resolved in that building at Hartley will preserve unspoilt green belt land. The evidence of the Diaries confirms that this resolution is a genuine one and Crossman has come round to a more complex view of green belt which enables him to make the Hartley decision. That this is a genuine resolution is underlined by the fact that Crossman was under no particular pressure (as he described it) to agree to building at Hartley.

Opponents of the Hartley decision present the inconsistency as the inconsistency in Crossman's original arguments, before he developed a more complex view of green belt. In this way the apparent destruction of green belt is in contradiction to Crossman's own previous views and the stated views of the government. As the preceeding section implies, the charge of inconsistency may also damage the credibility of the speaker on a wider level, since either the audience cannot make sense of his views, or they must re-construe his actions and views in order to accomodate (explain) this inconsistency. In addition to the re-construal suggested by Lord Molson it was also suggested, for example, that other outside factors had swayed the decision, such as the very high quality of the buildings proposed by

the developers (Times, 30th November 1964). This seemed to argue that the loss of amenity value was thereby lessened, and so the action was not so obviously inconsistent with the preservation of green belt land.

Most interesting are the implied re-construals that suggest dishonest motives for Crossman, that his left wing views were only used to gain power within the Labour Party and readily discarded as the need arose (see quote from Lord Molson above) or that he had some link or sympathy with the property developers (Times, 23rd December 1964). This type of re-construal reflects a deeply held social stigma against inconsistency, very similar to the attitudes (see Chapter 2) attributed to irrationality. If you are inconsistent, then it seems that you are either doomed to be labelled either as wickedly deceitful, or as a fool. Perhaps this reflects the problems which apparent inconsistency creates, since the ability to explain and predict behaviour is lost. The vehemence of some of the public outcry contrasts sharply with Crossman's cogent and straightforward description of his decision to allow building at Hartley, whilst he is aware that there may be some hostile reaction, he considers his case to be quite sound, and right.

#### Counteracting inconsistency

From what has been argued so far it is important for an arguer to counter charges of inconsistency, and in some debates to do so as quickly as possible. The Fragmentation corollary illustrates the power of such charges, since they may be made by an opponent bringing together two parts of a construct system which the arguer may himself

have not considered together. The strategy can create therefore considerable shock, and lead to confusion until the arguer has had time to review his system in this new light.

One counter strategy attempted by Crossman was to explain his new view of green belt and how this had for him resolved the apparent inconsistencies. However he mentions in the Diary that this is not a strategy that he considers will be effective.

Another is to remove or allay the inconsistency by arguing that it is a special case, and consequently requires actions which are not covered by the normal rules. There was some attempt at this line of argument by Crossman and other Ministers, for example, the Times quotes Lord Mitchison as arguing that:

"The Minister's decision was not be regarded as the first nibble potending the swallowing up of green belt. A courageous decision must be taken from time to time ....  
(Times, 22nd December 1964)

In this way the inconsistency is admitted but is explained by other overriding factors.

A further strategy is to admit the inconsistency and then take steps to ameliorate, or answer some of the inconsistencies. So for example the Times reported that the government had offered a proportion of the housing to be built to the Local Authority, thus removing some of the apparent inconsistency of a Labour Government dealing solely with private firms.

Crossman's main strategy was to follow the principle of placing Hartley as an exceptional case, and then arguing that more generally

the government would stick to its policy on green belt. Thus a series of meetings and press conferences were organized to emphasize the wider aspects of government housing policy. Crossman clearly felt that the argument that had persuaded him to allow building at Hartley would not persuade others. He was still able to conclude in May 1965 that the Hartely decision had been right, but had been badly presented.

The attempt to defuse Hartley rather than to try and convince opponents of the merits of his new 'amenity argument' reflects both Crossman's eventual realization of the strongly held values that his opponents held, and an attempt to isolate 'Hartley' from the rest of his political life. If Hartley could be shown to be a 'one off' decision then the inconsistencies are less easily transferred by opponents to other arguments. As the informal study also suggested the audience are continually seeking for a consistent explanation of events. Crossman, Lord Molson, and others all attempted to provide such explanations and so restore the coherency of the situation.

#### Predicting man

The effect of placing a Kellian view of man at the heart of any explanation of argument is to replace rationality by predictability. An audience to an argument must be able to play a social role with respect to the arguer, which means that his argument must be capable of being construed by them, or in short they must be able to make sense of the argument. If aspects of the argument are not easily construed within the current models that the audience have then there will be problems of acceptance and credibility for the arguer. Whilst in

this example arguments were rejected because they were not predictively useful, it conversely implies that arguments which enhance others ability to make sense of experience will be powerfully persuasive. Predictability is however a weaker condition than that of rationality, since it only requires that the audience can make sense of the argument, and not that the argument adheres to specific logical criteria or particular values. In this view argument becomes a way of communicating between construct systems, and is in part a process of arguers making some of their models of the world available to others. To gain acceptance these models must be useful aids to the fundamental activity of making sense of the world. They may fail to persuade on two counts:

- a) They may contain internal inconsistencies and so not be capable of use as predictive models.
- b) They may contradict existing models that the persuadee already has, and so not be capable of incorporation into his system.

As the discussion of Crossman shows, both these aspects of argument may be present. Crossman was able to resolve an internal inconsistency in his arguments over Hartley to his own satisfaction, but was not able to persuade others of this new line of argument, as it clashed both with important values that others held, and with their construing of his views.

#### Right or wrong ?

The discussion of the arguments in this chapter has carefully avoided assessing the arguments of each side in any terms other than their ability to persuade others. Crossman clearly believed that his argument was right, but that it had failed because it had been badly

presented, but what does he mean by this? It seems that he means that it was a good planning decision, that it would prevent infilling and spoiling elsewhere. But how could such a decision be evaluated in practice since it relies on value judgements about the outcomes? There were some people that argued, for example, that infilling produced a more natural and attractive growth of a village or town, in which case the criteria for judging Hartley are turned upside down. Similarly the debate between Councillor Reeves and Crossman on the suitability of the site relies upon each side assessing the 'commuter problem' according to different criteria. The complexity of social life enables a variety of conflicting arguments which can each claim support from available evidence (Edelman 1977). Judgement in this context becomes a political not a judicial act, it is concerned with values and with proof. As Eden and Harris argue it is usually possible to establish the 'matter energy' aspects of a problem (what happened), but what is crucial to understanding are the interpretations placed on that action (Eden and Harris 1975). Moving from a criterion of rationality to one of predictive usefulness emphasizes this more relative view of argument. Persuasion is linked not solely to demonstrable and logical proof, but also to the ability to create a network of ideas which enhances others' ability to make sense of experience.

#### Summary of Chapter 4

##### Hartley - A 'poor' case?

Chapter 3 focussed upon Crossman's view of the Hartley issue, and explored the relationship between values and argument for his own assessment of the arguments. This chapter considered the wider public debate and the interaction between Crossman's public arguments and those of his opponents. The overriding impression is that Crossman's support for his decision was seen by many to be a very 'poor case', and the reasons for this are explored in terms of the theories developed in Chapters 1 and 2.

If, as Chapter 3 argued, there is an important link between values and individuals' assessment of argument, then the concept of sociality, that is the need to adequately construe others' interpretations of experience, is important in being able to construct arguments that will persuade others. Crossman seriously mis-judged the strength of reaction against his decision, partly through not seeing that his decision challenged strongly held views about green belt land. The arguments put forward by Crossman seem to be more geared to persuading himself of the correctness of the decision than to persuading others.

The concept of commonality, that is the nature of shared construal of experience, was used to examine the other aspect of the debate which was very damaging to Crossman's case. Crossman was accused of inconsistency in his arguments from a variety of sources. For example, giving permission to private developers to build on green belt land was argued by opponents to be a contradiction of Labour



Party principles, and therefore also of Crossman's own views. It was also argued that the decision directly contradicted previous assurances from the Government of their support for the preservation of green belt land.

A charge of inconsistency seems to demand attention and response. The power of this charge rests on its suggestion that the arguer no longer makes sense to others. His arguments cannot whilst they appear inconsistent have the same power to predict and control experience. Thus a Kellian view of man suggests that it is a loss of predictability with respect to an individual construct system, rather than a lack of rationality with respect to a logical system, that is called into question by charges of inconsistency. Placing a Kellian view of man at the heart of any explanation of argument is to replace rationality by predictability as a primary requirement of a good case. Kelly argued that man behaves in such a way as to construe experience in an inherently consistent and predictable way. Thus an argument which contradicts existing construal can be rejected because its adoption decreases the utility of the system of which it is a part. From his own point of view Crossman seemed able to resolve the inconsistencies by developing a more elaborate view of the concept of 'green belt', but in the public debate chose a strategy of protecting the rest of his system from the implication of inconsistency by defining the Hartley issue as a special case.

The debate between Crossman and Councillor Reeves reveals another aspect of debate. Underlying many arguments are features of the event which are taken-for-granted, which if they were to change in some way would significantly affect the support for particular arguments. For

example, Reeves attempted to question the population figures which supported the assumption of a population explosion in the South East. This called into question the basis of the Hartley decision. This argument did not have much impact, and illustrated the difficulty of arguing against matters which are commonly construed. Common construal significantly defines and determines the arena of the debate, and is strongly supportive of some arguments rather than others. The effect of successfully challenging such construal is described in Chapter 5.

Appendix to Chapter 4 - references to Newspaper articles.

Times, 19th October 1964. p12.

Times, 29th October 1964. p16.

Times, 2nd November 1964. p6.

Times, 28th November 1964. p5.

Times, 30th November 1964. p6,14.

Times, 9th December 1964. p8.

Times, 22nd December 1964. p4.

Times, 23rd December 1964. p9.

Times, 24th December 1964. p9.

Times, 30th December 1964. p9.

Times, 2nd January 1965. p5.

Times, 13th January 1965. p11.

Times, 15th January 1965. p8.

Times, 16th January 1965. p12.

Times, 21st January 1965. p6.

Times, 28th January 1965. p22.

Times, 10th February 1965. p8.

Times, 12th February 1965. p17.

Sunday Times, 13th November 1983. p4.

## CHAPTER 5

### ARGUMENT IN PROGRESS

#### Introduction

This chapter describes and discusses a research project which involved a group of senior officers in different organizations debating a matter of mutual concern. In contrast to Chapters 3 and 4 the research event did not have a wider public interest and there was a much reduced sense of conflict and tension between the participants. These features of the debate mean that it may more easily be described as a debate rather than a conflictual argument and make it not untypical of discussions and meetings that form the basis of organizational life. This is not to say however that some level of personal difference and conflict did not exist, nor that the issues were not of significance to the participants, but it is to say that this was a less dramatic, less emotionally charged event than the argument over Hartley. This chapter will explore the differences between this event and that of Chapters 3 and 4, and examine the nature of argument in this setting. It also provided an opportunity to look at argument as it occurred.

#### The research setting

The research work on which this chapter is based formed part of a larger 18 month study into the nature of decision and policy making in U.K. charities. After the early stages of the main project, a separate area of interest to the participants emerged, which developed into a debate on the use of volunteers for charity work. The study of this debate provided the research data on which this

chapter is based.

The overall research aim of the main project was to examine and develop ideas about the ways in which groups of managers, or decision makers think about complex issues. Initial discussions with the participants identified two topics which each individual wished to use as the starting point for the discussions, these were:

- a) What led people to become involved with their charity?
- b) What led people to give money to their charity?

The organizations involved were:

The British Red Cross Society: a large organization which provides medical services and funds for disaster relief. It has a large number of local groups throughout the U.K.

The British Heart Foundation: a large charity raising funds primarily for medical research into heart disease. It has around 10 regional areas in the U.K. and many hundreds of small voluntary committees involved in fund raising in the community.

The Royal National Institute for the Deaf: the major charity for the deaf and hard of hearing. It acts as a pressure group and provides funds for a wide variety of projects affecting the deaf and hard of hearing.

Craigmyle Ltd: the largest firm of fund raising consultants in the U.K. dealing mainly with fund raising advice and support for specific appeals, for example fund raising for private schools.

These charities will not be further identified in this thesis, and the data reported has been slightly modified so that specific data cannot be traced to individuals or charities concerned. This is important because the senior officers concerned are making statements about volunteers that they work with.

These charities were not chosen to represent the nature of charitable work in the U.K. as a whole, but were chosen so that compared to each other their work was sufficiently different so that there was no direct conflict of interest, and sufficiently similar that the exchange between charities would be of interest to all parties. Each of the charities is in the top twenty list of charities in terms of their annual turnover and assets, and each has a major involvement in what is usually called 'event fund raising'. The consultants provide a rather different perspective, but are similarly concerned with encouraging volunteers to raise money for a cause. The area of work was chosen (that is charities) because previous work by the researchers had indicated that full-time charity officers relied heavily on idiosyncratic and well elaborated theories of operation in performing their daily tasks. Although the objective in terms of raising money is often well-defined and agreed, the numerous factors which can affect a fund-raising event make it a difficult event to predict, and make it very difficult to pass wisdom and experience on to others in terms of guidelines and rules. Charity officers particularly at regional level are also to some extent isolated from each other. The pressure and irregular hours of working mean that formal meetings, reviews, and contact with others in the same professional field is not frequent. For these reasons it was felt

that listening to charity officers talk about their work would provide a set of data with strongly elaborated arguments, and that the task of bringing some of this wisdom together would be of benefit to the officers themselves. These assumptions about the nature of charitable work are supported by reports such as that by Nightingale (1973), and McKee (1974) and more recently that of Mullin (1980). Previous research by the author into charity work, of a similar kind to that described here, also reinforces the complexity of the task, and the idiosyncratic nature of people's understanding of their charity world (Eden and Smithin 1979).

The intention was to develop a rich qualitative picture of how senior officers in a charity saw their task. The work of the main project is fully described in Sims and Smithin (1982), and Smithin and Sims (1982). The following sections describing the research process now focus upon the part of the work which relates specifically to this thesis, although some of the more general points about the early interviews also refer to the main project.

About three senior officers in each organization were involved in the debate on the use of volunteers, and represented the majority of those involved in the whole project. Their jobs within the organization were:

a) Regional Organizers: These officers were regionally based, full-time professional fund-raising organisers, reporting to a centrally based senior manager. Typically their work involved forming, and supporting committees of volunteers to organize and run fund-raising events.

b) Central Co-ordinators: Whilst they had different titles the jobs were similar between charities, and involved monitoring and supporting full-time regional organizers, and also organizing nationally based fund-raising activities.

c) Senior Managers/Directors: These were managers involved in the fund-raising activities of the charities and were primarily concerned with public relations and advertising at a policy level.

The distribution of participants over these activities was:

Regional Organizers 4

Central Co-ordinators 4

Senior Managers/Directors 3

Each participant was initially interviewed separately using the two topics described above as the starting point for the discussion. The format of the interview was based on the criteria described in the methodology section in Chapter 2. That is the interview was unstructured, and the interviewer acted as a 'listener' rather than taking a more directed approach. The aim was to build up an initial picture of the charity officer's view of this aspect of his work, and to listen for the theories and ideas that he used in this work. The process of recording the interview varied, but the data from the interview was in each case represented as a cognitive map, and transferred to a computer model. In this way computer models based on the initial interview (which typically lasted 1 - 2 hrs) were constructed for each participant.

In some cases the interview was recorded on audio tape and later



analysed in conjunction with notes taken at the time, in others the note taking took the form of a cognitive map drawn during the interview. In this latter case it was possible to show the map to the officer concerned at different points and more immediately gain feedback on it; checking for mis-understandings and clarifying meaning. It was also necessary to explain the nature of the cognitive map to the officer, but this as suggested in Chapter 2 is straightforward because the form and content of the map remains very close to the language and style of the interviewee, that is, it is a relatively transparent form of modelling.

Having produced the computer models for each individual (11 people), these were then analysed using the analysis procedures in the COPE software, as described in Chapter 3. The concepts in the models were grouped into related areas, based on choosing a 'key' concept as the starting point, and then looking for all the other concepts in the model, which provided an explanation for that key concept.

Key concepts were identified by the same procedure as described in Chapter 3. Briefly, concepts which appear in a large number of explanatory chains of argument; concepts which represent the end point or outcome of a chain of ideas (head concepts); concepts which if changed would directly or indirectly affect many other concepts in the model, were selected as key concepts.

The groups thus identified are indicative of areas of concern to the person whose model it is, that is they are closely linked to the values that the person may hold. A group structure for one of the participants is shown in Figure 5.1. These groups or explanatory

structures are taken to be topics of interest to these individuals when thinking about their work. A series of different topics were identified (Figure 5.2). The 'use of volunteers' emerged as topic for the majority of participants, two small portions of the maps for different participants on the topic of volunteers are shown in Figures 5.3 and 5.4. These were part of the feedback to participants in the earlier stages of the project. The use of volunteers was one of the topics which was further discussed with each individual. The Appendix at the end of the chapter shows all the concepts concerned with volunteers and the concepts directly associated with these, taken from each participant and combined into a single model.

Figure 5.1      Group structure for one participant

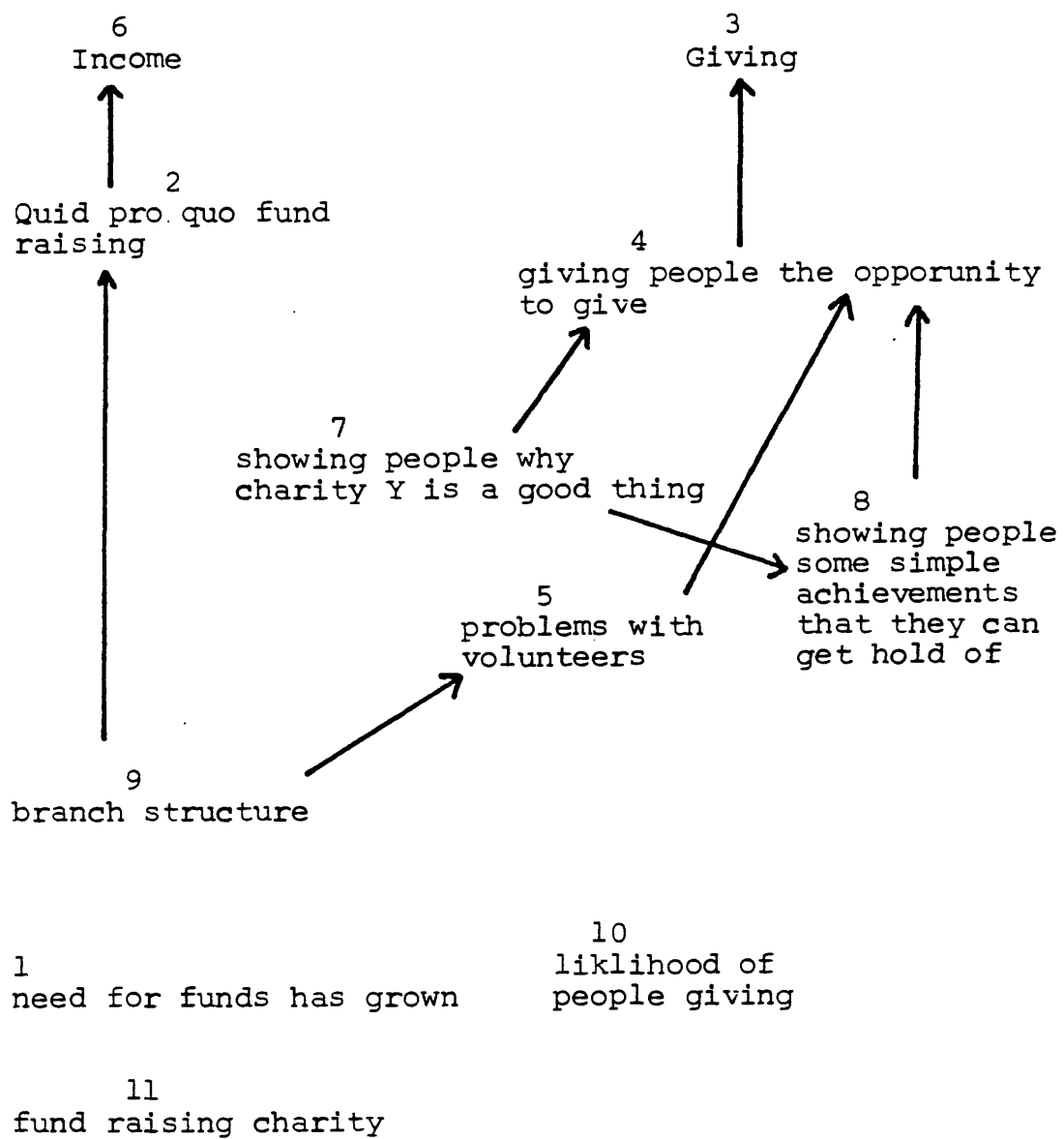


Figure 5.2      Topics of interest identified

REPLACEMENT OF MEANS BY ENDS IN FUND RAISING  
USE OF VOLUNTEERS  
DISPERSAL OF FUNDS  
GIVING TIME RATHER THAN GIVING MONEY  
FUTURE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR  
THE NATURE OF GIVING

Figure 5.3      'Snapshot' of map around volunteers for a participant

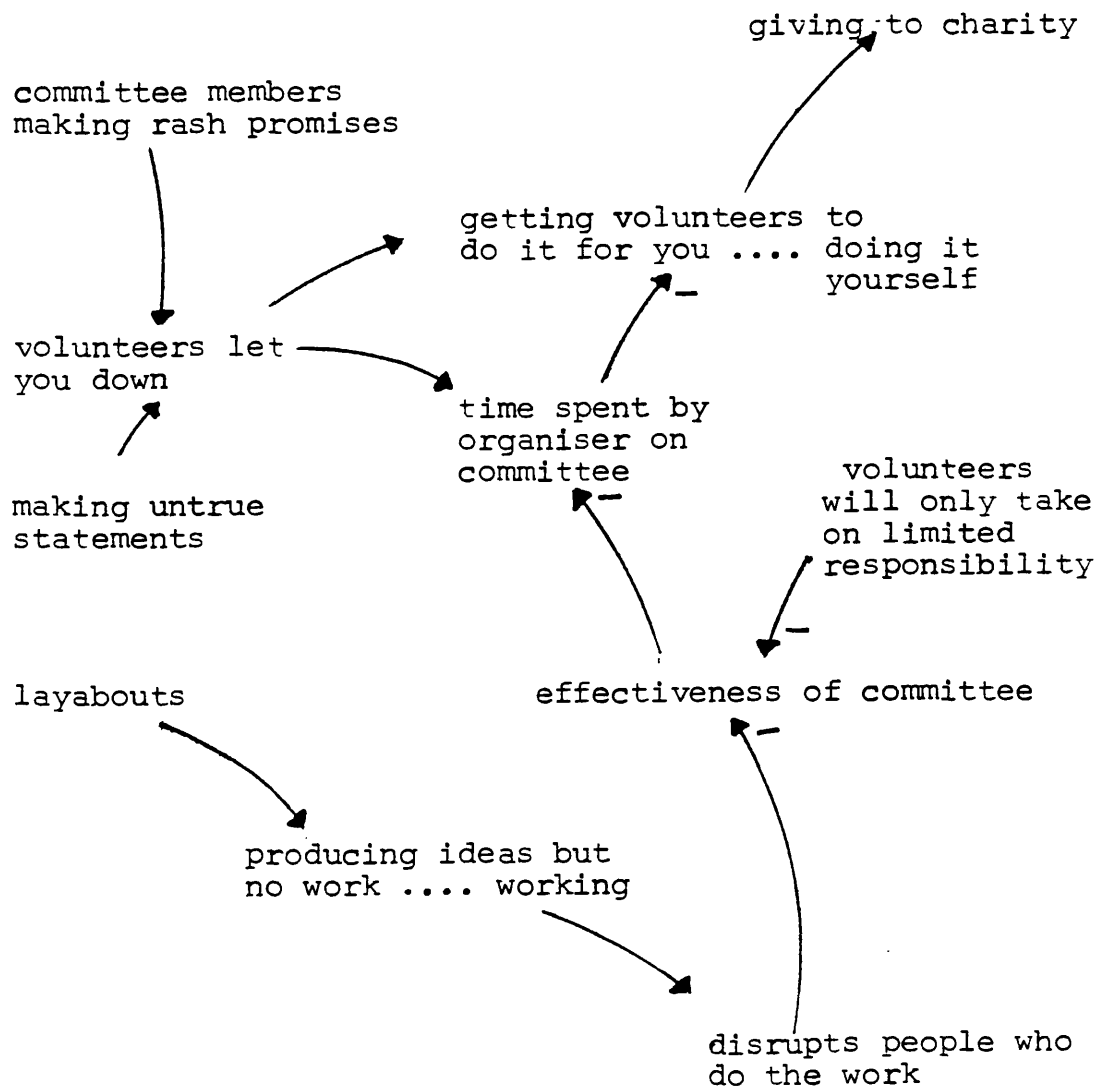
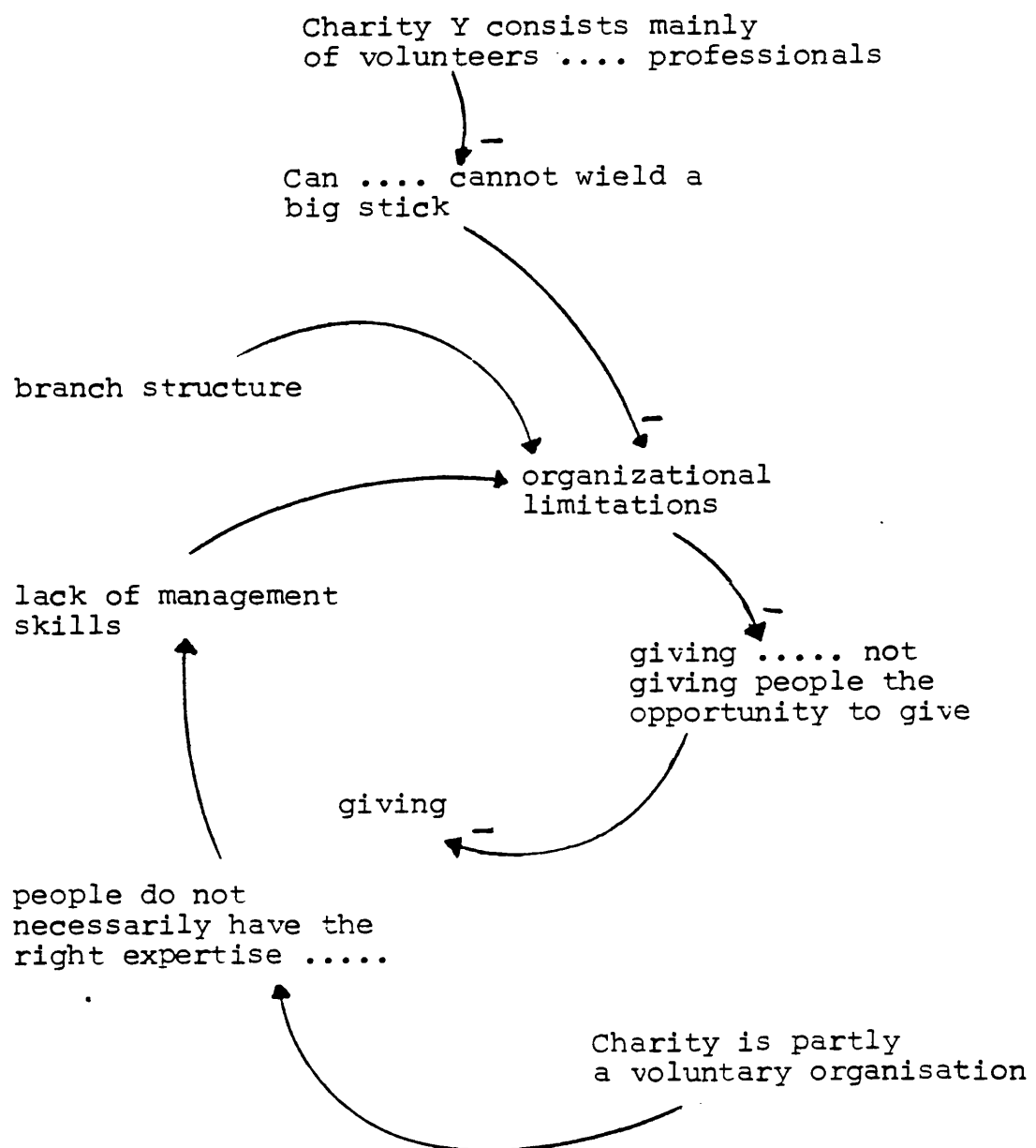


Figure 5.4 'Snapshot' of map around volunteers for a participant



A second round of interviews with each of the participants separately was held to feedback to them the results of the analysis as described above. Each participant was given a small booklet (11 pages approx), each page contained a part of the immediate explanatory structure round the key concepts that had been identified in that model. It was therefore a 'snapshot' of part of that group. The booklet also contained a full list of the model contents and a map of the relationship between the groups.

Working through the booklet (one page of which related to volunteers) it was possible to check on the interpretation of the original interview, making changes where necessary, and more importantly to check on the meaning of the group to the individual concerned, and whether it was important to him. In most cases participants found the booklet helpful, and in a number of instances described it as a very helpful procedure. Whilst some groups did not seem to be areas of concern, most groups were greeted with a comment like "that's exactly right", "yes, this is very important".

This suggested that the original coding had been faithful to the interviews, and that the grouping was helpful, and had identified significant areas. This conclusion must however be treated with some caution because this method of presentation can be socially self-fulfilling since attention is directed to a specific area by a researcher. It may be that the participant considers the area to be important because it is presented by a researcher who has spent some time working on it, and who may be seen as having skill at this type of analysis.

The extent and nature of the participants' reaction can however depend upon the way in which a project is initially set up, and the way in which participants' expectations are formed. In this project the researchers presented themselves as interested laymen (not experts in charity work), who had skills related to recording and reflecting individual wisdom (Sims and Smithin 1982) and that judgement lay with the participants and not with the researchers. Eden and Sims discuss these issues in greater detail (Eden and Sims 1979). It was argued previously that study of argument would require the collection of individually based accounts and reports of argument, rather than on macro-level surveys, because it is at this detailed level that argument normally occurs in organizations.

Generally the feedback did seem to make sense to the participants, and moreover the grouping structure identified areas which were of concern. In most cases the participants indicated a level of concern by:

Being prepared to elaborate on the topic.

Returning to the topic a number of times in the interview.

Expressing interest in and agreement on the grouping structure.

Saying that the isolation of the topic was a help to understanding.

#### Methodological issues of action research

Because this was 'action research' where the researcher is closely involved in the events, the methodological issue of authenticity and self-fulfilment of research raised generally in Chapter 2, requires additional consideration for this fieldwork. The data collection techniques and research interviewing style are based on the work of



social researchers, such as; the grounded theory of Glaser and Straus (1967); the notion of accounts as used by sociologists such as Harre (1979); theories of 'defining situations' McHugh (1968); and the work of Eden, Jones and Sims (1983). In each of these areas of research the researcher attempts to define for himself a role which enables him to empathize with the world as it is seen by the participant, that is, using the concepts, categories and language as used by that participant in his world. Such a role is that described by Kelly (1963) as being able to construe another's construal, to enter into a social role with him (the Sociality corollary). To do this effectively the researcher must to some extent abandon his own construing, which implies not taking up the role of an 'expert', someone who has additional skill or knowledge in the area under research. This implies therefore the only expert available on his own world is the participant himself. If this is the case how could the effectiveness or adequacy of the interaction be judged? Jones argues that the self-assessment of the participant is of critical importance since he is the only one able to make this judgement (Jones and Eden 1980). Measures such as those described above, in terms of the client's expressed interest and support, and willing involvement are good guides to the effectiveness of the research.

Whilst these are important criteria they are subject to the methodological flaws of mutual or individual self-deception, and of being unable to account for covert influences. A classic example and discussion in recent research of covert influence is that of Lukes (1974), who describes the influence of a large steel company on a town in Michigan, U.S.A. He suggests that the propaganda of the

company over the years created a situation of exploitation which the workers themselves did not regard as exploitation. In such a circumstance it is Lukes' own values which define this as an exploitation and defines the workers as being deceived. Whether Lukes' explanation is valid in a particular situation or not there is clearly a possibility of self-deception.

Similarly it is possible that in this research project participants are also mistaken about the usefulness or effect of the research even using their own criteria of success. Evaluation of the research methods and results must also therefore look to other criteria as well as self-assessment to judge the work. Some of these criteria emerged during this project, and are described in detail later; briefly they include:

The ability to consider richer data and more varied data.

Increased flexibility in assessing data and events.

Increased ease of entering into others' construal.

Decreasing the possibility of missing options and influences.

There is evidence, as described in the following section, that the use of the techniques was helpful in facilitating debate, and recording it, and was actively used by the participants in the debates to access a wider range of data than would have otherwise been available. The methodology and use of cognitive mapping is discussed further in Chapter 7.

Despite the methodological reservations this was an important set of data for research into argument in the context of this thesis,

because 'live' debate complements the diary research, and additionally provides information on argument as it occurs.

#### Later stages of the research process

Following the second round of interviews each individual model was revised according to the feedback from the participants. Some participants had explored the models in more detail using a computer terminal but this was not practicable in every case. This produced a set of models which represented the thinking of these charity officers on their work, grouped into topics which were of interest, including the topic of the use of volunteers which was common to all participants.

The next stage involved bringing together the views of each participant within each charity. To do this the individual models were, using the computer software, merged together. This simply meant adding the models to each other in a cumulative fashion, and then creating links between the models. Links between models were made by the researchers where concepts were similarly used, that is had similar direct consequences and explanations, even though the wording of each concept was slightly different (Eden, Smithin and Wiltshire 1980). A careful note was kept of these merging operations so that they could be checked with the participants, but in each case the number of merging operations was kept to a minimum, and only carried out in cases where there was no doubt about the intended meaning of the concepts. The effect of the merging process was to bring into close association the models for each individual in the charity, producing a larger model for each organization involved. For example,

where one participant used the concept 'GIVING' and another 'GIVING TO CHARITY' the direct explanations and consequences of each concept were examined, and a judgement made as to whether the two concepts were being used in a similar way. If it was decided that they were then they were merged. This meant that one of the concepts was retained and the other deleted, but all the concepts which were linked to the deleted concept were now linked to the retained concept. A relatively small number of merges of this sort is usually sufficient to make a large number of connections between two models.

The larger model was then used as the basis for a feedback session to members of each charity jointly as an opportunity to share ideas and further discuss the topics. The topics were again chosen on the basis of a grouping procedure as described earlier. This process was repeated with each organization involved, and the subsequent debate and information fed back into the larger models.

These amended models then formed the basis for a discussion between all those involved, on the topics identified. The final session of the project involved a workshop, with most of the members present, working on the topics, using the computer as a way of accessing the models, and using computer produced cognitive maps as visual aids to the discussion. Finally the researchers produced a summary report of the final session which was sent to all participants (Smithin and Sims 1983).

#### Common construal - inhibiting social facts

Previous chapters have described the commonality between arguers' construal as a very important aspect of accepting or agreeing with

others' arguments. Whilst each of the experiences of the charity officers using volunteers is different in detail, they seemed through their arguments to construe the use and behaviour of volunteers similarly. For example, the arguments presented were nearly all about the problems of using volunteers, and followed similar themes, pointing to the difficulty of control of volunteers, the difficulties in volunteers not picking effective fund-raising events (in terms of raising money), and the unreliable nature of voluntary support, for example:

CHARITY Y CONSISTS MAINLY OF VOLUNTEERS .... PROFESSIONALS



CANNOT WIELD A BIG STICK .... CAN



INCREASE IN ORGANIZATIONAL LIMITATIONS



NOT GIVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE ....



DECREASE IN GIVING TO CHARITY

and:

VOLUNTEERS WILL ONLY TAKE ON LIMITED RESPONSIBILITY



INCREASE IN TIME SPENT ON COMMITTEES



DECREASE EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZER

That individuals were similarly construing these issues was indicated during the joint debate by participants picking up arguments used by others, and then supporting them with anecdotes based on their own experience, for example, by participants saying 'that's exactly it',

'I agree wholeheartedly, a similar thing happened to me....'.

As part of a later analysis this notion of commonality was checked by building a separate model of the debate about volunteers. This was done by locating, in each of the larger models built for each organization, the concepts which were concerned with the use of volunteers, and then exploring the arguments directly related to these concepts. The related chains of arguments were then transferred to a new model so that argument about volunteers could be compared.

Using the computer software it was possible to analyse every chain of argument in the combined model in relation to its outcomes and compare these with all the other possible routes (arguments) through the model. This revealed that the overwhelming majority of outcomes for the use of volunteers were expressed as undesirable outcomes (in terms of money raised through giving), and there were very few arguments to contradict this.

This indicated that these arguments formed a self-consistent set of ideas about volunteers, common to each of the officers who contributed to the model. This contrasted with the individual model from one of the members of the fund-raising consultancy who referred only twice to volunteers and did not contribute to these stages of the debate. Volunteers were not a problem for him in his world.

Because of these agreed social facts the debate was not initially very productive. The officers of one charity (charity Z) had previously expressed considerable interest in this topic because they were thinking about using volunteers on a large scale for the first time. In many ways they were in a similar position to Crossman, in wanting

to listen to arguments on a topic with which they were not very familiar, but on which they needed to make decisions. The initial effect of the debate was therefore to confirm their own worries about using volunteers and so persuade them that it was not worth changing policy on this issue. The discussion reflected a taken-for-granted aspect of the some officers' charity world. Volunteers were always a problem, but the situation was not capable of change. The arguments represented the operation of a social fact. It operated in the early part of the final debate as a powerful means of persuasion, resting on the commonality of each experience and the consequent suggestion of inevitability, 'volunteers are always with us' as one participant put it.

However the researcher was able to intervene and change the course of the debate and this represents a potentially persuasive argument, counteracting the common construal. The intervention was to suggest to the participants that they spend a little time examining why one of the participants did not have problems with volunteers and was satisfied with his interactions with them. The resulting discussion proved much more fruitful in terms of persuading the participants from charity Z to consider ways of using volunteers.

#### Re-construal as an argumentative force

As the charity officers began to explore the use of volunteers by the officer who felt his interaction with them was satisfactory, it became clear that the volunteers that he used (because of the nature of the fund-raising) were usually individuals with professional qualifications, or people used to dealing with, or raising, money.

This precipitated a discussion of the need for professionalism as opposed to using volunteers. For example:

CHARITY X IS MAINLY A VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATION



PEOPLE DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE



LACK OF MANAGEMENT SKILL IN BRANCHES

and:

AN INCREASE IN PROFESSIONALISM



MORE SUCCESSFUL CHARITIES

The contrast between professionalism and volunteers, and one organization's use of volunteers with particular skills recalled, for some of the participants, portions of their models which discussed the construct (or constructs similar to this) of PROFESSIONAL rather than VOLUNTEER. It also suggested a new level of differentiation for VOLUNTEER of:

GOOD rather than BAD VOLUNTEERS

Compared to the previous construal of VOLUNTEERS rather than PROFESSIONALS, this new construal suggested new possibilities for change and action, so that the arguments about volunteers were seen as a way of describing desirable features that volunteers should or should not have rather than arguments about using or not using volunteers at all. This led to a number of officers picking up previous parts of their own and others' models which had looked at the way in which the availability of volunteers was affected by



social change. In this case there was some suggestion that early retirement schemes, and increasing un-employment, made available a larger number of potential volunteers with 'professional skills'. There was also a discussion of the time span for involvement of volunteers in a charity, suggesting that this should be a much shorter period, since this was a striking feature of the one organization's use of volunteers. These later discussions on the use of volunteers seem to have produced some possible lines of thought for tackling the 'social fact' of the inevitable problems of using volunteers and made available to the participants a wider range of options and possibilities in the use of volunteers.

The effectiveness of this intervention came about through an intervention which challenged the taken-for-granted world, and did so by pointing to an example of an alternative construction. This seemed to encourage a re-construal of this part of the system. For example, by linking concepts of 'professionalism' and 'volunteers' more closely; by providing a new construct 'good .... bad volunteers'. This does provide pointers ways of constructing arguments which challenge social facts. A more successful challenge than that of Councillor Reeves when he challenged the population statistics.

The above discussion may give the impression that a radical change took place, but a study of the concepts in each of the individual models shows that many of the elements of this change already existed in some individuals' thinking about the situation. However, it seems that the 'social fact' of the problems of volunteers prevented then considering these ideas as potential actions. The discussion and

challenge of this social fact acted as a way to re-explore these ideas, but to explore them as real possibilities for action, and it was this latter change which energised the debate. This suggests that the debate also operated as a kind of 'group-think' in which the needs for support and approval of the group outweighed the development of ideas. There are close links in this concept of persuasive argument to theories of bounded vision (Huxham and Dando 1981) and work on 'groupthink' (Janis 1972). More than anything else it illustrates the need in studying persuasive argument to take account of the taken-for-granted aspects of the situation, and to consider whether or not they can be successfully challenged.

#### Values and persuasion

Chapter 3 described the importance of knowing about values, and the relation between values in determining the effects of argument. The values or areas of concern for each officer involved were also determined in this project, as described above (Figure 5.1).

The debate about volunteers revealed an important link between two areas of concern common to many of those involved, namely, between the use of volunteers and charity policy for the dispersal of funds.

A typical argument was:

TANGIBLE THINGS THAT PEOPLE CAN GET HOLD OF.....RESEARCH

↓  
PEOPLE LIKE TO HEAR WHAT LOCAL RESEARCHER IS DOING

↓  
LOCAL DISPERSAL OF FUNDS

and:

LOCAL DISPERSAL OF FUNDS

↓  
INCREASE COMMITTEE'S EFFECTIVENESS

The general theme of the arguments was that volunteers were more motivated and effective in raising funds when the results of their activities were dispersed to support local needs and institutions, rather than being used on centrally or nationally based activities. For the charities involved this was an aim which conflicted with their objects of providing research funds, or major capital facilities. This was especially the case for the organization not using volunteers on a large scale, since much of their work had a national bias or emphasis. This created a vicious circle that:

NOT USING VOLUNTEERS.....USING VOLUNTEERS

↓  
NATIONAL EMPHASIS.....NO LOCAL PROJECTS

↓  
DIFFICULT TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS...VOLUNTEERS ATTRACTED TO CHARITY

↓  
NOT USING VOLUNTEERS.....USING VOLUNTEERS

This was an interesting example of value conflict for each of the charities, and in this case in the final debate the vicious circle was used as an argument for not using volunteers. The force of the

argument rests on a predicted inevitability of the circumstances which is implied by the circular nature of the argument and the implication is that 'it is very hard to do anything about this'.

Some strategies were suggested for breaking this circle, for instance by severing the link between NATIONAL EMPHASIS and DIFFICULT TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS, by a process of explaining to volunteers the need for the dispersal of funds to be centrally based. The identification of the loop provides a number of possible argumentative strategies (see also Chapter 6), but in this case the officers were unable to effectively challenge the loop. An argument which could dispel the inevitability produced by the vicious circle would in this circumstance be powerfully persuasive.

So far the data produced by this action research has supported the conclusions of the study of the Crossman Diaries in respect of the role in argument of taken-for-granted aspects of social life, and the links between values and persuasive argument. There is also a similarity between the charity officers who were pre-disposed to listen to argument because they felt themselves to be in a relatively 'new' situation, and Crossman's experience as Housing Minister. The joint support from two very different research settings is encouraging in terms of the utility of the theories of argument proposed. The following sections consider a further aspect of argument which could not really be studied by the diary research; the performance of argument.

#### The performance of argument

This setting also provided an opportunity to be involved in and observe

argument between individuals as a social event. The interactions between individuals when working in groups is a widely researched topic (see Reardon 1981 for a survey of this in the specific context of argumentation). Marwill and Schmitt (1967) propose a taxonomy of 16 different forms of interpersonal persuasion. This section concentrates upon an individual's ability to argue effectively in this context, which is taken to mean an individual's ability for putting forward his arguments in such a way that they are attended to by the rest of the group, and have influence on the course of the debate.

Mangham (1979), and others (McLean, Sims, Mangham and Tuffield 1982) have recently looked at the way in which individuals are perceived by each other in this sort of setting, and the effect that this has on the individual's ability to influence that group. They have also studied, more generally, the nature of small group interactions (see also Goffman 1959, and the original work of Lewin 1947). When groups come together to overtly undertake an agreed task, sometimes categorized as a task-oriented group (Luthans 1973), there are also other factors which need to be taken into account in understanding the nature of the event. For example, for groups with members from the same organization, the different status and power of individuals in their work roles (Jones and Smithin 1984) may influence what is openly discussed; differences in personal style and taste may lead to personal interactions between individuals (Duck 1980); differing abilities in personal communication and social skills may also significantly affect the ability of an individual to become fully involved in the group (Hollander 1964). Perhaps most importantly the

past history of the individuals working together will affect the influence that the individual has on his colleagues (Mangham 1978).

In this setting these effects were present, for example, one officer was consistently described (to the researchers), by a colleague, as not worth listening to. In some debates it was clear that the views (which had previously been expressed to the researchers) of some officers were withheld when the meeting included a more senior colleague. Nonetheless the research setting and presentation attempted to account for these issues where possible, in particular the emphasis on the nature of the event as an 'opportunity to share ideas' and the use of the computer models encouraged the groups to discuss the issues in a reasonably frank manner. Also the individual models provided the researchers with an opportunity to check for this effect by comparing the individual models with views expressed in a joint meeting.

The final meeting was introduced as an opportunity for officers from each of the three charities to get together and discuss issues of mutual interest, and feedback at the end of the day from the participants suggested that they had all interpreted and used the day in this way. Also the final meeting involved only two of the participants from each charity so to a large extent each officer came to the meeting with little knowledge of most of the other participants. The only way for each individual to judge the others was through their ability to take part in and influence the debate; on trial was each individual's ability to argue.

It was readily apparent as the debate proceeded (and this was also the

case in the meetings within the charities) that some members of the group were able to argue more effectively than others. For example, the effective arguers, were more attentively listened to, and the points that they made were more frequently referred to by others. They were also able to suggest new directions as the debate proceeded and these were followed by others. In contrast less effective arguers, tended to be listened to politely and not attentively, and the theme of their argument was frequently not followed by the next speaker, nor referred to by later speakers. The audience were also noticeably less 'energetic' in responding to these less effective arguers. Whilst the above implies that the ability to argue effectively is personally based, there were a number of occasions where, as the topic changed, individuals who had previously not argued effectively had more influence on the new part of the debate, and others became less effective than previously.

Analysis of the tapes of the final debate, and further analysis of the model contents, suggests some of the features of effective argument:

a) An important skill was the ability to empathize with, to adequately construe another's argument. Skilled arguers noticeably used previous arguments and points made earlier by other participants as the starting point for their own intervention. Although there were occasions when this picking up of previous comments was used as a conversational device to enter the debate, and the following argument was not substantially related to previous arguments, this method of beginning an intervention usually reflected some careful listening to

what had gone before. The empathy seemed to lie in an ability to relate others' experiences to the arguer's own experience, and in this way link the two experiences. If a speaker was using his own experience to argue a point then the act of linking it to other arguments increased the support for that point, and directly involved the other participants whose experiences were included in this way.

b) In contrast to this, and perhaps more striking were those interventions which had no effect on the course of the debate. In these instances, for example, an individual related an anecdote which was not directly linked to the current topic; or an individual simply repeated or reinforced a previous point. The effective arguer added something additional to the debate, as well as reinforcing previous points.

It became apparent during the course of the debate that individuals who only repeated points or tended to speak in isolation to the current topic, were less readily listened to than others even where their argument was in a particular instance more substantive. That is, once they had presented themselves as 'ineffective arguers' then all their arguments tended to be ignored regardless of the actual content or force of the argument. Although as mentioned above it was possible for individuals to be seen as ineffective arguers in relation to a particular topic, and effective arguers on a different topic. This follows Mangham's observations on the influence of previous interactions between participants influencing interpretations of later interactions.

c) Gaining the interest and attention of the audience was however



only a part of the argumentative process. During the day some individuals were able to present arguments which were noticeably persuasive, in terms of the future items that were discussed in the debate. That is, they were able to suggest a line or theme for the discussion which was taken up by others. An interesting example occurred after a fairly lengthy discussion, full of anecdotal illustrations, on the use of volunteers. There came a point at which everyone who wished to had contributed to this topic, and the debate was gradually coming to a temporary halt. At this point one of the participants drew a link between the use of volunteers and the dispersal of funds, saying at the conclusion 'they always act as if it's their money'.

This link was quickly taken up by a number of others, and they each pointed to areas in their models where they had discussed this issue, and this was then expanded into an important debate on the structure of charities. The argument for a link between volunteers and problems over the control of dispersal, drew on the previous discussion, and added a new link to the debate. It was an idea which linked two values which for some of the participants had not been previously explicitly linked in this way. A noticeably influential feature, which occurred on other occasions as well, was the use of a phrase which summed up the essential theme of the argument, often as a two or three line summary, or as above, as a colloquial phrase.

There is a close link here to the work of Axelrod on the use of novel argument as he termed it (Axelrod 1979) and the initial discussions that were described for Crossman in Chapter 3. Links between

concepts which are presented in a way that they are novel to other participants, that is, not yet linked to their construct system, seem to be powerfully influential. Axelrod suggested that in the debates that he analysed, which were each negotiations between different groups, the introduction of novel argument, that is, argument which the 'other side' had not previously addressed or been prepared for, was a common tactic. This type of argument occupied a considerable proportion of the debating time. It should be noted however that the negotiation setting is a very different one to that described in this chapter and the link would need to be more carefully investigated. In this example the arguer seems to have been able to put forward a link between two areas of interest to most of the participants (as shown by their computer models), which in some way makes clearer or sums up arguments which they had also thought about but not expressed in this way. The argument thus established new links between areas of concern (values) for the participants, and so elaborated their construct system, opening different channels of thought. In Kelly's terms the arguer has been able to suggest for others (and himself) new links between existing parts of construct systems which are elaborative. They increase the utility of the construct system in making sense of experience, which is part of Kelly's definition of the growth of a construct system.

In this debate there was no use of counter-argument in the sense described in Chapter 4, and participants did not attempt to find inconsistencies in each others' arguments. Nonetheless in order to gain the attention and claim the belief of others there was a need to argue persuasively but in an elaborative rather than a critical

fashion.

d) Loop analysis and conflict analysis (checking the all consequences of chains of argument in relation to outcomes, described earlier) have suggested that the participants viewed some of the arguments as inevitable and unchanging, and this acted as a powerful argument for the status quo. For example the vicious circle shown earlier relating to the dispersal of funds and the use of volunteers, as with all such loops, suggests an inevitable consequence. In this case a self-regulating situation. This raises the possibility that the use of this form of presentation can itself be a powerful form of argument. An argument to the effect that 'whatever we do will have no effect' is really an attempt to persuade people that their current construal is adequate. This is often an attempt to determine the boundaries of a discussion, and so limit change in a predictable way. This can be used in a deliberately argumentative way (as opposed to bounded vision and group think which are not usually described as deliberate) to limit the boundaries of discussion, and in effect ensure that some arguments are more persuasive than others. This effect was discussed in Chapter 1 in relation to bounding arguments as 'value laden' or 'rational'.

#### Different types of argument

The initial discussion for Crossman described in Chapter 3 and the setting described in this chapter are in sharp contrast to the conflictual public debate in which Crossman was embroiled, described in the latter parts of Chapter 3 and in Chapter 4. In the conflictual circumstances powerful arguments relied upon pointing out inconsistencies in others' arguments, and possibly their values, as a

way of destroying the credibility of an argument. In the less directly conflictual circumstances powerful arguments stem from an elaboration of commonly held beliefs and the introduction of new ideas and links related to these beliefs.

In each case the ability of arguers to adequately construe the other's argument significantly influences the nature of the interaction that is possible between them. Also in each circumstance there is a 'pool' of definition or construal around the interaction which is common to all involved which thereby becomes a socially defined and agreed fact. Such social facts and themes have a marked influence on the course of the debate and the possibilities that are envisaged in the interaction.

If argument is therefore viewed as an interaction between different construal then a persuasive argument can be defined as an argument which enables the arguee to significantly elaborate or change his construal. For example, if inconsistencies are pointed out then the arguer must take action to resolve those inconsistencies in some way; or if new links are made then these can be added to an existing construct system. This is in agreement with Kelly's definition of the direction of change of a construct system.

The differences between argumentative situations described in the foregoing chapters might be interpreted, following a number of authors on argumentation (Rieke and Sillars 1975), that argument is situationally specific and determined. It seems however more fruitful to see each argument setting as capable of different interpretations by the participants, interpretations which they will moreover attempt

to 'impose' on others' definitions of the event. The nature of the argument depends therefore crucially on the negotiation (often implied rather than explicit) between the participants involved. This is more fruitful because it does not pre-suppose particular expectations about the argument, and can account for the situations in which participants construe the argument setting very differently, and does not impose a fixed categorization on argument.

## Summary of Chapter 5

### Argument in progress

This chapter described a research setting very different from the two others used in this thesis. It was an 'action research' setting in which the researcher was involved with the other participants and so may influence intentionally and unintentionally the research process. It is additionally a method in which the data is not completely available to other researchers. Such a setting is methodologically more prone to the self-fulfilment discussed in Chapter 2 and to hidden biases. This particular piece of research was also methodologically complicated by forming part of a larger study with other aims than the study of argument. Nonetheless it was worth attempting because some of the participants were apparently pre-disposed to listen to arguments. Like Crossman, described in Chapter 3, they were moving into an area which they felt they had less experience in, and were anxious to elaborate their ideas by listening to other arguments. The opportunity to study at first hand a number of arguments between individuals was also an important motive for the research.

The arguments between Crossman and Reeves described in Chapter 4 suggested that the taken-for-granted features and assumptions which form the background to any argument can significantly influence the persuasiveness of particular arguments. The work involving the charity officers included a discussion on the use of volunteers. In this debate the views put forward formed an agreed and consistent set of arguments about the difficulties of using volunteers. This overwhelming consensus initially blocked debate, and had almost

persuaded those looking for advice on the use of volunteers not to use them. Whilst the need for group approval may have turned participants away from the development of ideas (group think), their previous individual models suggested that these views on volunteers were well established for each individual. These social facts precluded even the possibility of there being a persuasive argument (for those looking for advice) for using volunteers. An intervention by the researcher encouraged participants to construe 'volunteers' in a way which opened up some new possibilities for action on the use of volunteers. In this sense arguments which can foster or encourage a re-construal of parts of the system have a persuasive power.

A further inhibition to some arguments was the realization that change suggested by one line of argument had negative implications for another value. For example, the use of volunteers would inhibit the degree of central control over the dispersal of funds. As similarly described in Chapter 3, there was an important link between the persuasiveness of arguments and the values that they were seen to impinge upon.

Being able to study the debates as they occurred enabled the construction of a picture of the effective performance of argument. Whilst the data is limited to one setting and therefore not necessarily applicable more widely, it did reveal some noteworthy features of the arguments which markedly guided the course of the debate, and were in that sense effective. For example effective arguers were better able to construe and use others' arguments when presenting their own, and normally added to the content of the debate

rather than reinforcing or repeating points already made. Some skill at playing a social role with respect to others seems important here.

Effective arguers seemed also better able to use arguments to link areas which had previously not been linked, and so potentially create for others concepts and links which elaborated their own construct systems. That is to say, a persuasive argument has the property of increasing the utility of the audience's own construct system for making sense of experience.

Whilst the techniques of cognitive mapping again proved useful for recording and presenting argument it is more difficult in this setting to separate the use of the techniques from the course of the events, since explicit use was made of cognitive maps and the computer package during the debates.

In a similar way to Chapters 3 and 4 the research setting illustrated the link between values and persuasive argument. It emphasized the influence of common construal on defining the background to a debate and thus the support given to one set of arguments rather than another. In addition the practice of argument was examined suggesting that there are skills of argumentation, in addition to social skills of self-presentation, which are worthy of attention in studying argument in small group settings.



Appendix to Chapter 5 - list of combined model on volunteers and  
'snapshots' of part of the model as cognitive maps.

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ARGUMENTS ON USE OF VOLUNTEERS

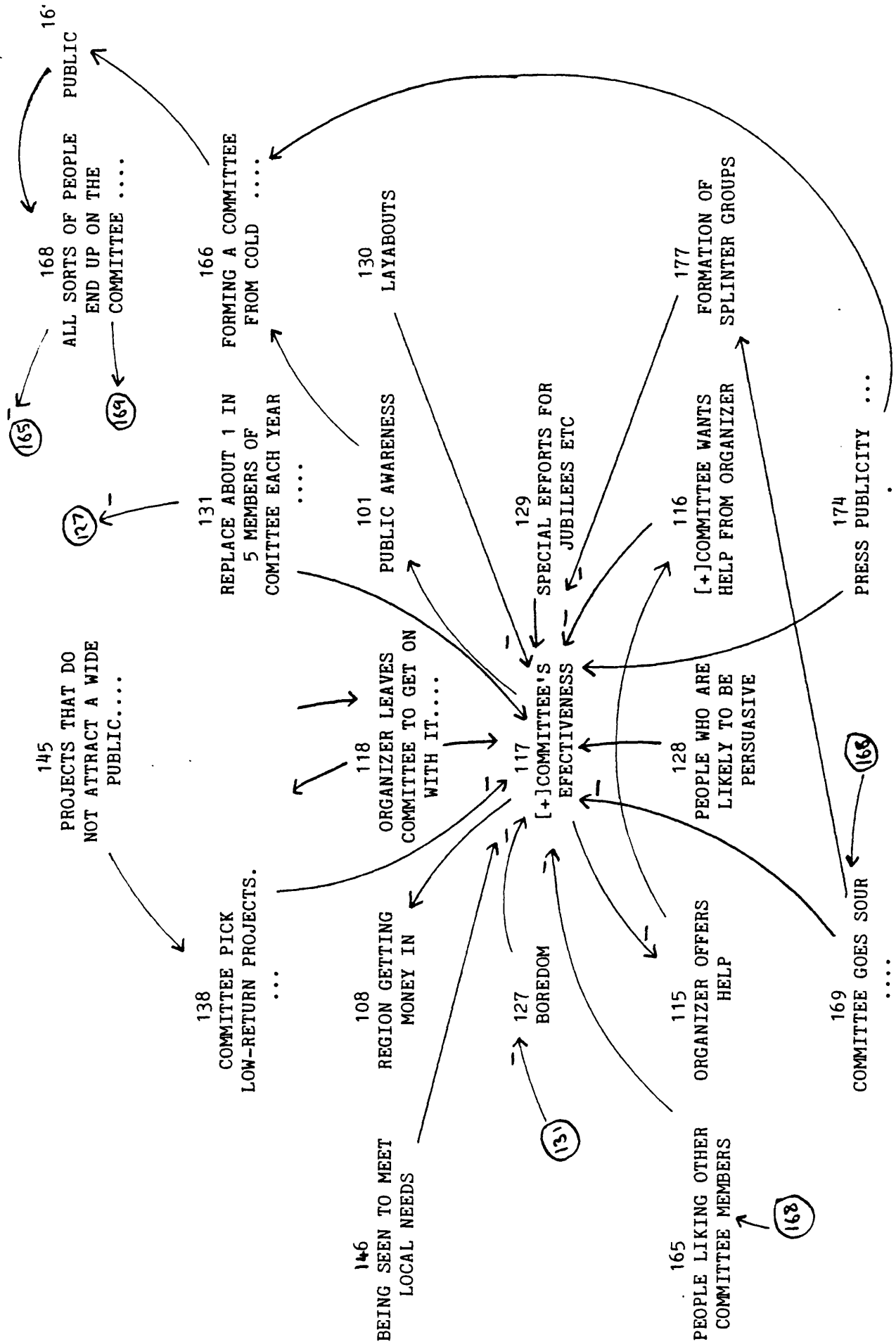
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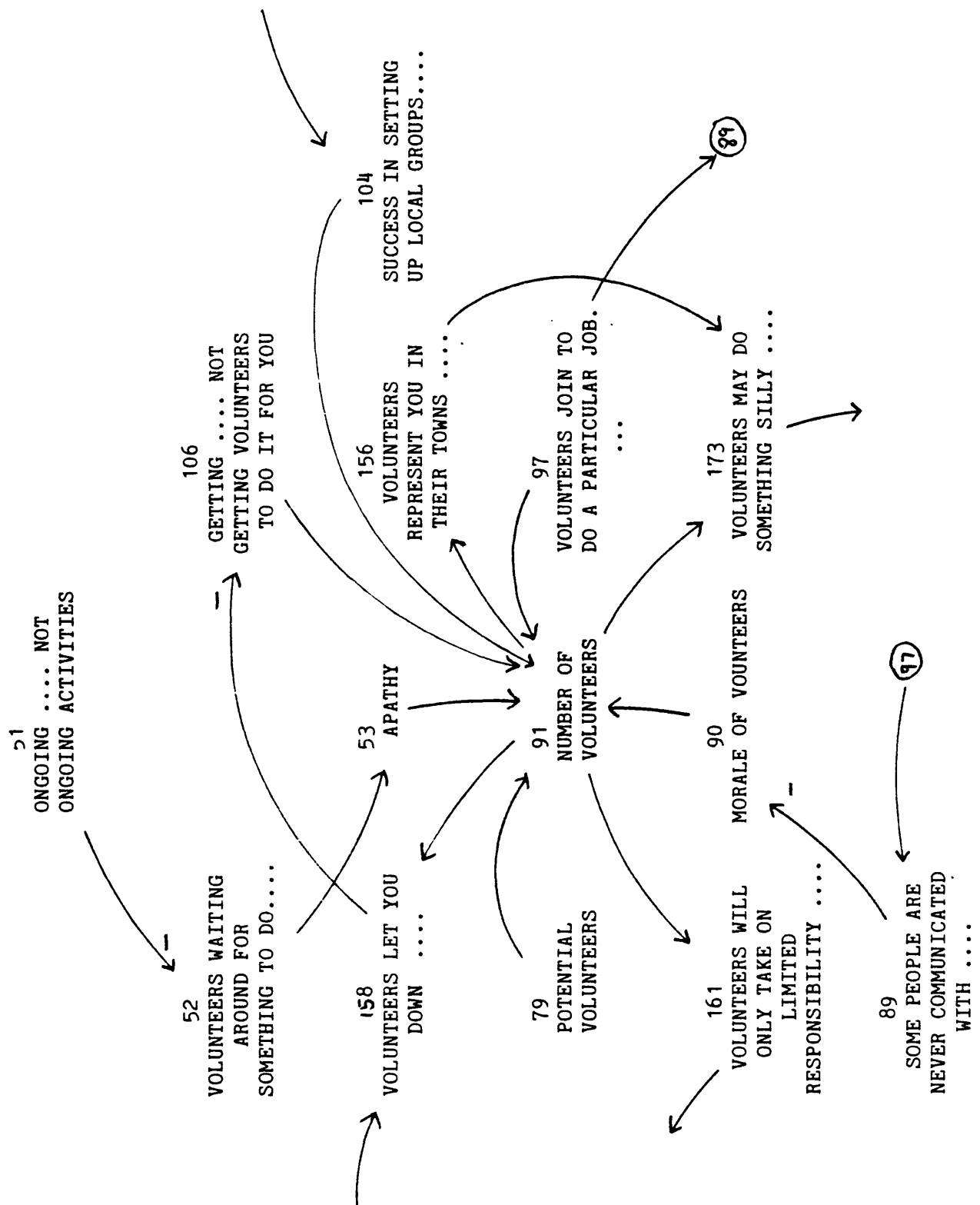
1 CHARITY X FINDING OUT EXTENT OF PUBLIC AWARENESS. . [not]CHARITY X FINDIN  
2 FEEDBACK FROM ADVISORY(CONSUMER) GROUP. . [not]FEEDBACK FROM ADVISORY(CON  
3 FUND RAISING FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS . . . . . FUND RAISING FOR GENERAL NEEDS  
4 LINKING A PARTICULAR NAME OR CAUSE TO WHAT IS GOING . .[not]LINKING A PAR  
5 NEEDS CHANGE QUICKER THAN PLANS . . [not]NEEDS CHANGE QUICKER THAN PLANS  
6 SMALL LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS . . . . . [not]SMALL LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS  
7 SOCIAL WELFARE ORGANIZATIONS FOR THE CUSTOMERS. . [not]SOCIAL WELFARE ORG  
8 NEED TO BE BUSINESSLIKE IN OPERATION. . [not]NEED TO BE BUSINESSLIKE IN O  
9 CHARITIES ARE COMPETITIVE LIKE SELLING DETERGENTS . .[not]CHARITIES ARE C  
10 BREAKING AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL.PATERNALISTIC: WAY OF WORKING WITH 'CUSTOM  
11 SOCIAL CHANGE . . . . . [not]SOCIAL CHANGE  
12 OTHERS BEING ARTICULATE ON BEHALF OF THE 'CUSTOMERS'. . [not]OTHERS BEING  
13 FRICTION BETWEEN OLD AND NEW APPROACHES TO PROBLEM. . [not]FRICTION BETWE  
14 PEOPLE WITH NO FAMILY CONNEXIONS WITH PROBLEM WORKING WITH 'CUSTOMERS' .  
15 PEOPLE WANT TO IDENTIFY WITH SPECIAL PROJECTS . .[not]PEOPLE WANT TO IDEN  
16 PEOPLE'S WILLINGNESS TO BECOME CONCERNED WITH PROBLEMS. . [not]PEOPLE'S W  
17 VERY HANDICAPPED YOUNG PEOPLE . . . . . [not]VERY HANDICAPPED YOUNG PEOPLE  
18 CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE . . . . . [not]CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE  
19 LOCAL GROUPS AND CLUBS RAISE THEIR OWN MONEY. . [not]LOCAL GROUPS AND CLU  
20 NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE LOCALLY TO MAKE IMPACT. . [not]NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE LOCAL  
21 NATIONAL. . . . . .LOCAL: APPEALS  
22 [+]NATIONAL COMMITMENT . . . . . [-]NATIONAL COMMITMENT  
23 DO NOT. . . . . DO: IDENTIFY INDIVIDUALS IN APPEALS  
24 PROBLEMS WITH SCOTLAND . . . . . [not]PROBLEMS WITH SCOTLAND  
25 PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT PROBLEM . .[not]PEOPLE DO NOT KNOW ENOUGH  
26 CHARITY X HAS NO CORE OF VOLUNTEERS . .[not]CHARITY X HAS NO CORE OF VOLU  
27 NO ADMINISTRATIVE OR ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS. . [not]NO ADM  
28 AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS ONLY . . . . . [not]AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS ONLY  
29 PROBLEMS OF USING VOLUNTEERS . . . . . [not]PROBLEMS OF USING VOLUNTEERS  
30 PUBLIC NOT AWARE OF COST OF PROBLEM . .[not]PUBLIC NOT AWARE OF COST OF P  
31 HIGH COST OF AIDS . . . . . [not]HIGH COST OF AIDS  
32 FIXED AMOUNT OF MONEY AVAILABLE FOR CHARITIES . .[not]FIXED AMOUNT OF MON  
33 [+]COMPETITION WITH OTHER CHARITIES . .[-]COMPETITION WITH OTHER CHARITIE  
34 LIMIT TO GIVING . . . . . [not]LIMIT TO GIVING  
35 USE . . . . . DO NOT USE: VOLUNTEERS FOR FUND RAISING  
36 NO COST INVOLVED . . . . . [not]NO COST INVOLVED  
37 PROBLEM IS DIFFICULT TO PORTRAY . . [not]PROBLEM IS DIFFICULT TO PORTRAY  
38 REPUTATION IS AT STAKE . . . . . [not]REPUTATION IS AT STAKE  
39 USE PROFESSION . . . . . [not]USE PROFESSION  
40 CHARITY X NOT COMPETITIVE WITH MORE EMOTIVELY APPEALING CHARITIES . .[not]  
41 FUND RAISING IN LOCALITIES . . . . . [not]FUND RAISING IN LOCALITIES  
42 [+]PROFESSIONALISM. . . . . [-]PROFESSIONALISM  
43 [+]COMPETITIVENESS OF THE CHARITY BUSINESS. . [-]COMPETITIVENESS OF THE C  
44 [+]MORE SUCCESSFUL CHARITIES. . . . . [-]MORE SUCCESSFUL CHARITIES  
45 ADOPTING THE SAME BRAND IMAGE AS OUR COMPETITORS. . [not]ADOPTING THE SAM  
46 [+]PRODUCING SUCCESSFUL FORECASTS . . . [-]PRODUCING SUCCESSFUL FORECASTS  
47 SET UP BRAND IMAGE ACCORDING TO OUR ORGANIZATION. . [not]SET UP BRAND IMA  
48 CHARITY Y TAKING OFF . . . . . CHARITY Y NOT QUITE TAKING OFF  
49 ONGOING . . . . . NOT ONGOING: ACTIVITIES  
50 VOLUNTEERS WAITING AROUND FOR SOMETHING TO DO . .[not]VOLUNTEERS WAITING  
51 [+]APATHY . . . . . [-]APATHY  
52 [+]PEOPLE GIVING. . . . . [-]PEOPLE GIVING  
53 THE NEED FOR FUNDS HAS GROWN . . . . . [not]THE NEED FOR FUNDS HAS GROWN

56 CHARITABLE WORK IS LABOUR INTENSIVE . .[not]CHARITABLE WORK IS LABOUR INT  
 57 GIVING. . . . .NOT GIVING: PEOPLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE  
 58 [+]ORGANIZATIONAL LIMITATIONS . . . . . [-]ORGANIZATIONAL LIMITATIONS  
 59 COUNTY BRANCH STRUCTURE . . . . .[not]COUNTY BRANCH STRUCTURE  
 60 FUND RAISING. . . . .SERVICE AND FUNDRAISING: CHARITY  
 61 VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY WANT TO FUND RAISE. . [not]VOLUNTEERS DO NO  
 62 DAY TO DAY RUNNING OF THINGS IS DONE BY TRAINED PEOPLE. . [not]DAY TO DAY  
 63 [+]PUBLIC'S IMAGE OF CHARITY Y. . . . . [-]PUBLIC'S IMAGE OF CHARITY Y  
 64 CHARITY Y CONSISTS MAINLY OF VOLUNTEERS . .[not]CHARITY Y CONSISTS MAINLY  
 65 CAN . . . . . CANNOT: WIELD A 'BIG STICK'  
 66 PERSUADE PEOPLE TO GIVE JUST A LITTLE TIME . . . . . RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS  
 67 [+]DIFFICULTY IN HARNESSING TALENT. . . [-]DIFFICULTY IN HARNESSING TALENT  
 68 [+] EXTRAORDINARY VARIABILITY OF LOCAL BRANCHES . . [-] EXTRAORDINARY  
 69 [+]MORALE . . . . . [-]MORALE  
 70 [+]NEED TO SHOW THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERS . . [-]NEED TO SHOW THE VALUE OF V  
 71 PUBLIC DOES NOT FOLLOW ACCOUNTS . .[not]PUBLIC DOES NOT FOLLOW ACCOUNTS  
 72 [+]GOOD ASSOCIATIONS GET ATTACHED TO THE EMBLEM . . [-]GOOD ASSOCIATIONS G  
 74 VOLUNTEERS ARE GETTING HARDER TO COME BY. . [not]VOLUNTEERS ARE GETTING H  
 75 [+]COMPETING ACTIVITIES IN SOCIETY. . . [-]COMPETING ACTIVITIES IN SOCIETY  
 76 CHANGING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE. . [not]CHANGING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
 77 CHARITY Y DOES A WIDE VARIETY OF WORK . . [not]CHARITY Y DOES A WIDE VARI  
 78 CHARITY Y HAS A WIDE APPEAL . . . . [not]CHARITY Y HAS A WIDE APPEAL  
 79 [+]POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS . . . . . [-]POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS  
 80 PEOPLE WHO WERE HELPED IN THE LAST WAR . . [not]PEOPLE WHO WERE HELPED IN  
 81 CHARITY Y NOT ALWAYS SEEN AS ACHIEVING WHAT IT SHOULD . . [not]CHARITY  
 82 LOCAL GROUPS CANNOT ALWAYS MEET HIGH EXPECTATIONS . . [not]LOCAL GROUPS C  
 83 GOOD. . . . . POOR: COMMUNICATION  
 84 LACK OF RESOURCES . . . . . [not]LACK OF RESOURCES  
 85 LACK OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN BRANCHES . . [not]LACK OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS  
 86 PEOPLE DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE . . [not]PEOPLE DO NO  
 87 CHARITY Y IS PARTLY A VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION . . [not]CHARITY Y IS PARTL  
 88 PEOPLE LOWER DOWN DO NOT HAVE INFORMATION TO COMMUNICATE. . [not]PEOPLE L  
 89 SOME PEOPLE ARE NEVER COMMUNICATED WITH . . [not]SOME PEOPLE ARE NEVER CO  
 90 [+]MORALE OF VOUNTEERS. . . . . [-]MORALE OF VOUNTEERS  
 91 [+]NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS . . . . . [-]NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS  
 93 NEWLY RETIRED PEOPLE . . . . . [not]NEWLY RETIRED PEOPLE  
 94 PEOPE WHOSE IMAGINATION CAN BE CAPTURED . . [not]PEOPE WHOSE IMAGINATION  
 95 PEOPLE WHO NEED SOME 'DRAMA' . . . . [not]PEOPLE WHO NEED SOME 'DRAMA'  
 96 CHARITY Y DEPENDS ON VOLUNTEERS . . [not]CHARITY Y DEPENDS ON VOLUNTEERS  
 97 VOLUNTEERS JOIN TO DO A PARTICULAR JOB. . [not]VOLUNTEERS JOIN TO DO A PA  
 98 FORMS OF GIVING . . . . . [not]FORMS OF GIVING  
 99 SPONSORED EVENTS . . . . . [not]SPONSORED EVENTS  
 100 [+]VOLUNTEERS'TIME. . . . . [-]VOLUNTEERS'TIME  
 101 [+]PUBLIC AWARENESS . . . . . [-]PUBLIC AWARENESS  
 102 ADVERTISING . . . . . [not]ADVERTISING  
 103 50% OF POPULATION DIE OF DISEASE. . [not]50% OF POPULATION DIE OF DISEASE  
 104 SUCCESS IN SETTING UP LOCAL GROUPS. . [not]SUCCESS IN SETTING UP LOCAL GR  
 105 FUND RAISERS . . . . . CO-ORDINATORS OR ADMINISTRATORS  
 106 GETTING . . . . . NOT GETTING: VOLUNTEERS TO DO IT FOR YOU  
 107 ABILITY . . . . . INABILITY: OF ORGANISER TO DELEGATE  
 108 [+]REGION GETTING MONEY IN. . . . . [-]REGION GETTING MONEY IN  
 109 [+]TIME TO MOBILISE NEW VOLUNTARY EFFORT. . [-]TIME TO MOBILISE NEW VOLUN  
 110 [+]ORGANIZERS FEELING ABLE TO COPE WITH VOLUNTARY GROUPS. . [-]ORGANIZERS

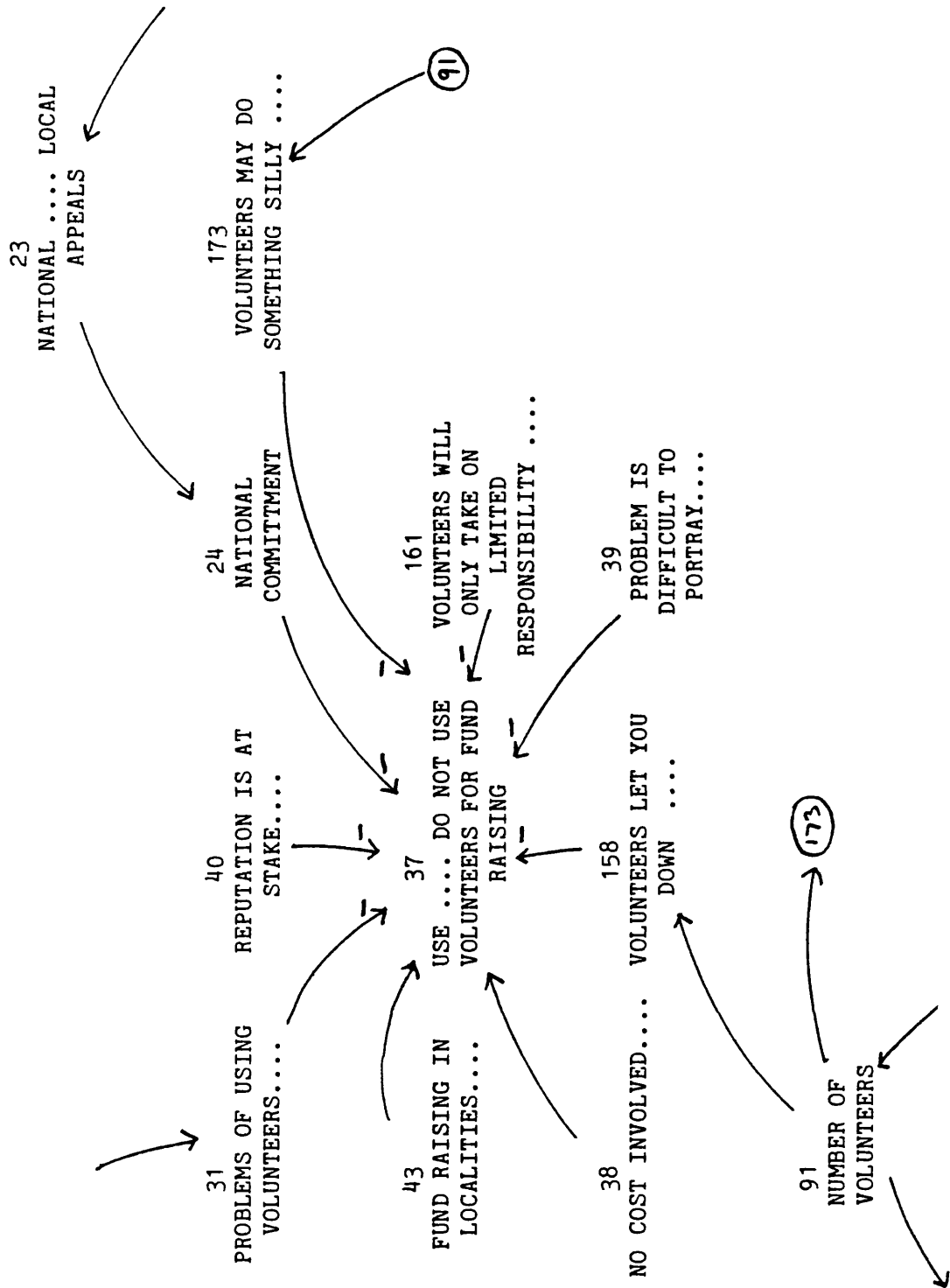
111 [+] RELIEVING ORGANIZERS OF ADMINISTRATION. . [-] RELIEVING ORGANIZER  
 112 GETTING THE RIGHT . . . . . GETTING THE WRONG: LEADER FOR A COMMITTEE  
 113 [+]QUALITY OF COMMITTEE . . . . . [-]QUALITY OF COMMITTEE  
 114 [+]COMMITTEE GETTING DEPENDENT ON ORGANIZER . . [-]COMMITTEE GETTING DEPENDENT  
 115 [+]ORGANIZER OFFERS HELP. . . . . [-]ORGANIZER OFFERS HELP  
 116 [+] COMMITTEE WANTS HELP FROM ORGANIZER . . [-] COMMITTEE WANTS HELP FROM  
 117 [+] COMMITTEE'S EFFECTIVENESS. . . . . [-] COMMITTEE'S EFFECTIVENESS  
 118 ORGANIZER LEAVES COMMITTEE TO GET ON WITH IT. . [not]ORGANIZER LEAVES COMMITTEE  
 119 [+]EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZER . . . . . [-]EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANIZER  
 122 PROBLEM WITH GIVING CAPITAL EQUIPMENT . . [not]PROBLEM WITH GIVING CAPITAL  
 123 [+]NEED FOR STAFF, BUILDING, MAINTENANCE ETC. . [-]NEED FOR STAFF, BUILDING  
 124 [+]COMMITTEES . . . . . [-]COMMITTEES  
 125 [+]ONRUNNING COMMITTEES . . . . . [-]ONRUNNING COMMITTEES  
 126 [+]COMMITTEES FOR SPECIAL EFFORTS . . . [-]COMMITTEES FOR SPECIAL EFFORTS  
 127 [+]BOREDOM. . . . . [-]BOREDOM  
 128 [+]PEOPLE WHO ARE LIKELY TO BE PERSUASIVE . . [-]PEOPLE WHO ARE LIKELY TO  
 129 [+]SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR JUBILEES ETC . . [-]SPECIAL EFFORTS FOR JUBILEES ETC  
 130 [+]LAYABOUTS. . . . . [-]LAYABOUTS  
 131 REPLACE ABOUT 1 IN 5 MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE EACH YEAR . . [not]REPLACE ABOUT  
 132 [+]EXTRA LOCAL GROUPS . . . . . [-]EXTRA LOCAL GROUPS  
 133 [+]PUBLIC GET FED UP. . . . . [-]PUBLIC GET FED UP  
 134 [+]PEOPLE GETTING INVOLVED. . . . . [-]PEOPLE GETTING INVOLVED  
 135 TOO MANY DIFFERENT GROUPS . . . . . [not]TOO MANY DIFFERENT GROUPS  
 136 LOCAL DISPERSAL OF FUNDS . . . . . [not]LOCAL DISPERSAL OF FUNDS  
 137 [+]LOCAL WISH TO GIVE . . . . . [-]LOCAL WISH TO GIVE  
 138 COMMITTEE PICK LOW-RETURN PROJECTS. . [not]COMMITTEE PICK LOW-RETURN PROJECTS  
 139 PRODUCING IDEAS BUT NO WORK . . . . . [not]PRODUCING IDEAS BUT NO WORK  
 140 DISRUPTS THE PEOPLE WHO DO THE WORK . . [not]DISRUPTS THE PEOPLE WHO DO  
 141 FUNDS FOR LIMITLESS NEEDS . . . . . [not]FUNDS FOR LIMITLESS NEEDS  
 142 [+]TARGET APPEALS . . . . . [-]TARGET APPEALS  
 143 CHANGES IMAGE OF THE TARGET GROUP . . [not]CHANGES IMAGE OF THE TARGET GROUP  
 144 SOMETHING FOR PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED IN . . [not]SOMETHING FOR PEOPLE TO  
 145 PROJECTS THAT DO NOT ATTRACT A WIDE PUBLIC. . [not]PROJECTS THAT DO NOT ATTRACT  
 146 [+]BEING SEEN TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS . . . [-]BEING SEEN TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS  
 147 LOCAL HOSPITAL OR CHAIR . . . . . [not]LOCAL HOSPITAL OR CHAIR  
 148 GIVING. . . . . NOT GIVING: CAPITAL EQUIPMENT  
 149 COMMITTEES THAT ARE OUT OF CONTROL. . [not]COMMITTEES THAT ARE OUT OF CONTROL  
 150 COMMITTEE MEMBERS MAKE RASH PROMISES . . [not]COMMITTEE MEMBERS MAKE RASH  
 151 MAKING UNTRUE STATEMENTS . . . . . [not]MAKING UNTRUE STATEMENTS  
 152 CAUSING TROUBLE LATER . . . . . [not]CAUSING TROUBLE LATER  
 153 COMMITTEES DON'T DO THINGS I DON'T LIKE . . [not]COMMITTEES DON'T DO THINGS  
 154 [+]ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM UNCHANNELLED . . [-]ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM UNCHANNELLED  
 155 ORGANIZER HAS TO GO IN AND DO FIRST AID . . [not]ORGANIZER HAS TO GO IN  
 156 VOLUNTEERS REPRESENT YOU IN THEIR TOWNS . . [not]VOLUNTEERS REPRESENT YOU  
 158 VOLUNTEERS LET YOU DOWN . . . . . [not]VOLUNTEERS LET YOU DOWN  
 159 [+]BEING KIND TO VOLUNTEERS . . . . . [-]BEING KIND TO VOLUNTEERS  
 160 [+]TIME SPENT ON COMMITTEES . . . . . [-]TIME SPENT ON COMMITTEES  
 161 VOLUNTEERS WILL ONLY TAKE ON LIMITED RESPONSIBILITY . . [not]VOLUNTEERS WILL  
 162 THERE ARE TIMES WHEN COMMITTEES WANT TO COPE ON THEIR OWN . . [not]THERE  
 163 PEOPLE LIKE TO HEAR WHAT A LOCAL RESEARCHER IS DOING . . [not]PEOPLE LIKE  
 164 [+]TANGIBLE THINGS THAT PEOPLE CAN GET HOLD OF. . [-]TANGIBLE THINGS THAT  
 165 [+]PEOPLE LIKING OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS. . [-]PEOPLE LIKING OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

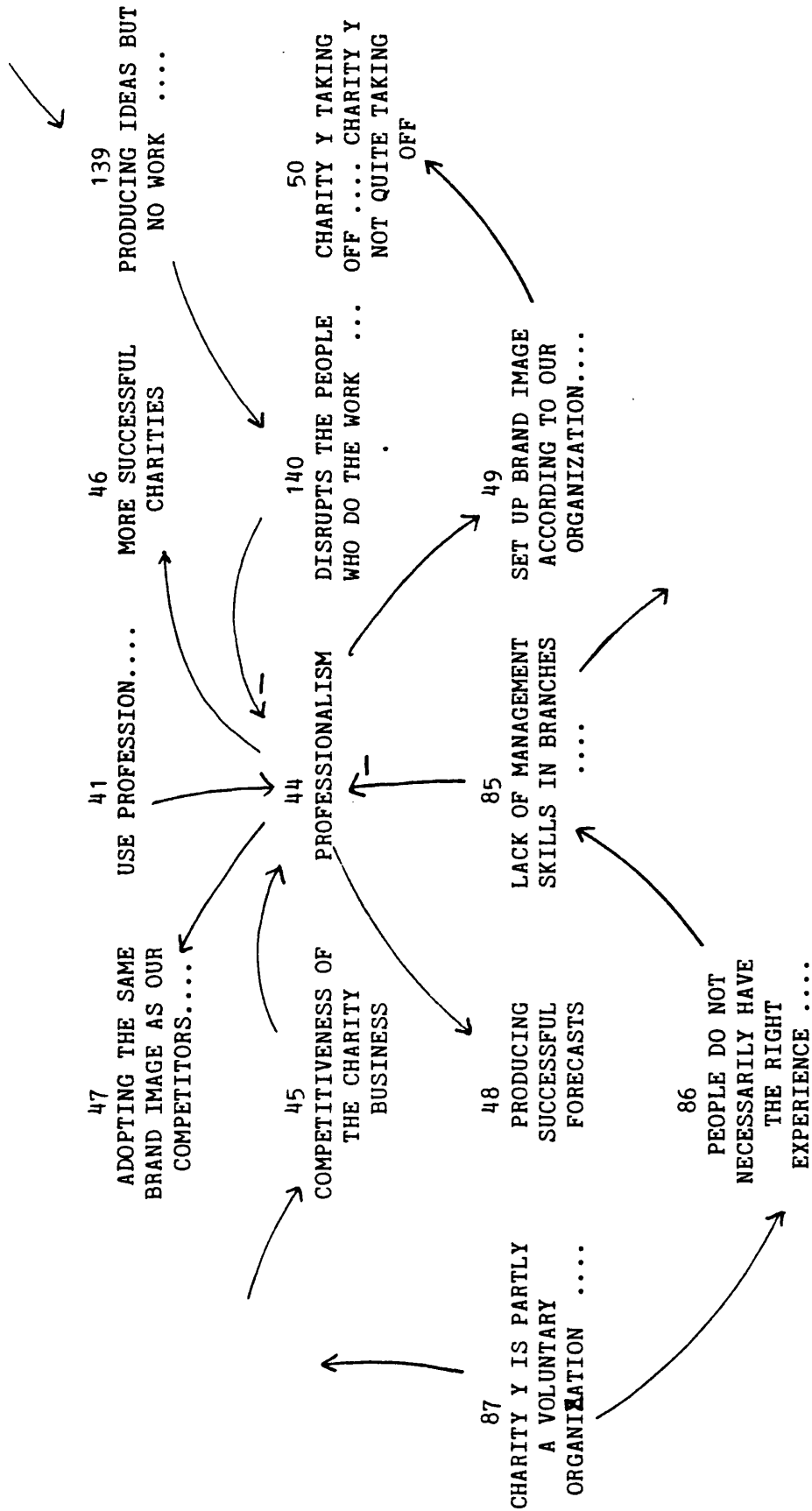
165 [+]PEOPLE LIKING OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS. . [-]PEOPLE LIKING OTHER COMMIT  
 166 FORMING A COMMITTEE FROM COLD . . [not]FORMING A COMMITTEE FROM COLD  
 167 PUBLIC MEETING . . . . . [not]PUBLIC MEETING  
 168 ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE END UP ON THE COMMITTEE . . [not]ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE  
 169 COMMITTEE GOES SOUR . . . . . [not]COMMITTEE GOES SOUR  
 170 [+]REALIZING THAT RESEARCH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EQUIPMENT . . [-]REALIZI  
 171 [+]WANT TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL HOSPITAL . . [-]WANT TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL HOS  
 172 [+]IMAGE OF CHARITY Z . . . . . [-]IMAGE OF CHARITY Z  
 173 VOLUNTEERS MAY DO SOMETHING SILLY . . [not]VOLUNTEERS MAY DO SOMETHING SI  
 174 PRESS PUBLICITY . . . . . [not]PRESS PUBLICITY  
 175 MAY LEAD TO PUBLIC ARGUMENT (EG . . [not]MAY LEAD TO PUBLIC ARGUMENT (EG  
 176 [+]LOCAL INCIDENCE OF DISEASE . . . . . [-]LOCAL INCIDENCE OF DISEASE  
 177 [+]FORMATION OF SPLINTER GROUPS . . . . . [-]FORMATION OF SPLINTER GROUPS  
 178 PERSONAL APPROACH . . . . . [not]PERSONAL APPROACH  
 179 APPROACHES BY VOLUNTARY HELPERS . . [not]APPROACHES BY VOLUNTARY HELPERS  
 180 IDENTIFY THE POTENTIAL SOURCES OF BENEFACATION . . [not]IDENTIFY THE POTEN  
 181 PITCH TOP GIFT AT AROUND 10% OF TOTAL . . [not]PITCH TOP GIFT AT AROUND  
 182 TRY TO GET TOP GIFTS EARLY . . . . . [not]TRY TO GET TOP GIFTS EARLY  
 183 IDENTIFY POTENTIAL MAJOR GIVERS . . [not]IDENTIFY POTENTIAL MAJOR GIVERS  
 184 LIKELY. . . . . NOT LIKELY: TO HAVE SUCCESSFUL APPEAL  
 185 PROJECT MUST SATISFY REQUIREMENT THAT IS UNIQUE . . [not]PROJECT MUST SAT  
 186 PROJECT MUST BE PROPERLY PLANNED . . [not]PROJECT MUST BE PROPERLY PLANNE  
 187 MUST HAVE NECESSARY PLANNING CONSENTS ETC.. . [not]MUST HAVE NECESSARY PL  
 188 RECOGNIZABLE CONSTITUENCY OF GIVERS . . [not]RECOGNIZABLE CONSTITUENCY OF  
 189 PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS . . . . . [not]PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS  
 190 PROFESSIONAL FIRM . . . . . [not]PROFESSIONAL FIRM  
 191 COMPANIES . . . . . [not]COMPANIES  
 192 GRANT-MAKING TRUSTS . . . . . [not]GRANT-MAKING TRUSTS  
 193 STATUTORY BODIES . . . . . [not]STATUTORY BODIES  
 194 LOCAL GOVERNMENT . . . . . [not]LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
 195 FUND RAISING STUDY . . . . . [not]FUND RAISING STUDY  
 196 [+]MONEY RAISED . . . . . [-]MONEY RAISED  
 197 FINDING PEOPLE PREPARED TO INFLUENCE POTENTIAL BENEFACORS . . [not]FINDI  
 198 [+]LEADERSHIP . . . . . [-]LEADERSHIP  
 199 PREREQUISITES WHICH SHOULD BE SATISFIED FOR AN APPEAL . . [not]PREREQUISI  
 200 EVENT FUND RAISING IS TIME CONSUMING. . [not]EVENT FUND RAISING IS TIME C



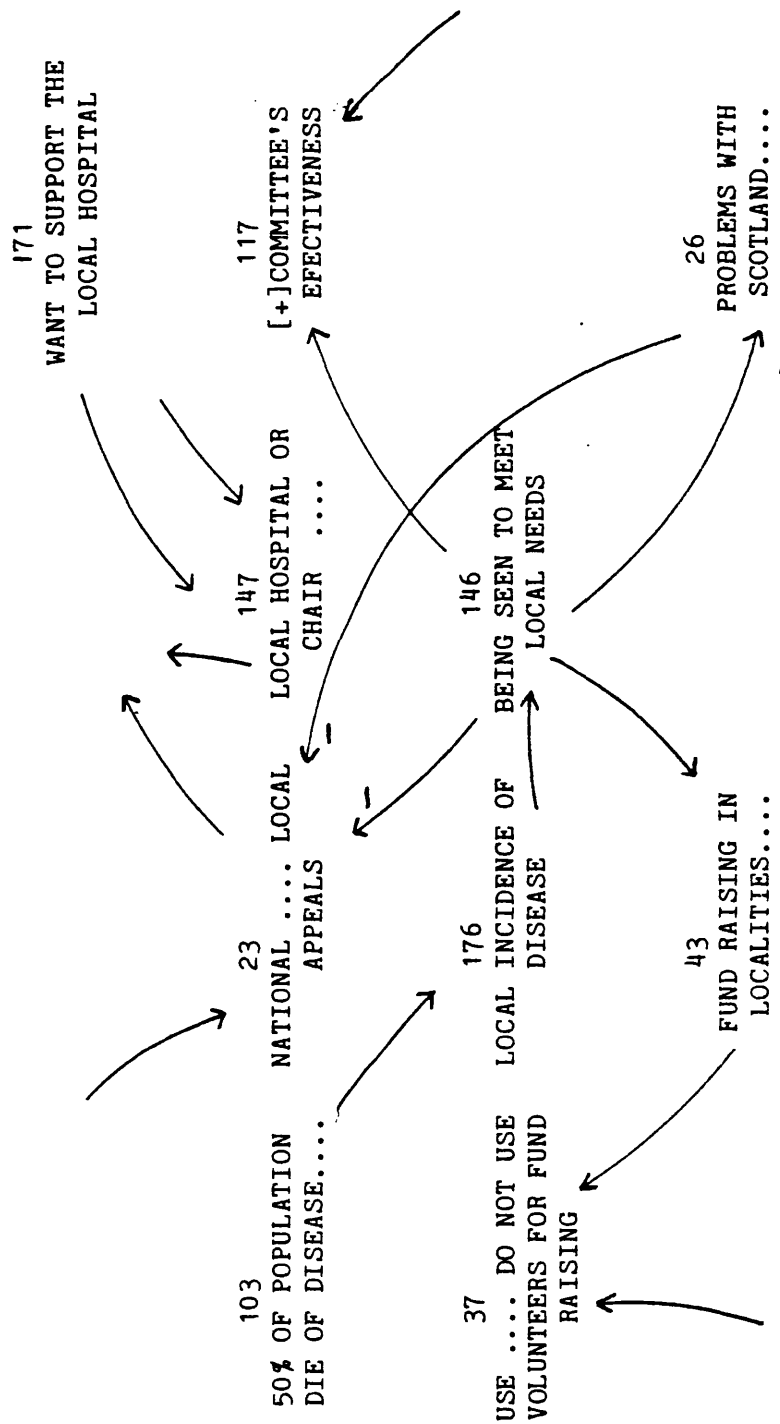


146  
BEING SEEN TO MEET  
LOCAL NEEDS









## CHAPTER 6

### ARGUMENT DESIGNED TO PERSUADE

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the nature of persuasive argument during the course of a parliamentary debate, and attempts to isolate features of individual speeches which observers and participants felt at the time were influential, and those which were considered, conversely, to be 'weak' or counter-productive in terms of persuading people to the arguer's point of view. Each of the features is discussed in relation to the theories and ideas developed in the foregoing chapters. This setting focusses on the arguments put forward during the debate and their effect on the course of the debate. As with the other chapters the focus is on the arguments used and less attention is paid to other aspects of the social event. There is strong evidence to suggest that this was a setting in which persuasion by verbal argument was particularly important and was seen to be so by the participants.

#### The research setting

On 13th July 1983, the House of Commons debated a motion and series of amendments on capital punishment. The main motion (proposed by Sir Edward Gardiner a respected Conservative back-bench M.P.) was:

This house favours the restoration of the death penalty for murder

In addition five amendments were also tabled adding the following phrases to the motion:

- a) ....resulting from acts of terrorism
- b) ....of a police officer during the course of his duties
- c) ....of a prison officer during the course of his duties
- d) ....by shooting or causing an explosion
- e) ....in the course or furtherance of theft

The full text of the debate is given in Weekly Hansard (13th July 1983).

The debate had arisen from a government pledge at the recent general election (June 1983), to allow a free vote in parliament on the issue of capital punishment at an early opportunity. In the preceeding weeks there had been considerable discussion outside parliament on the issue, primarily conducted through the press and television, and public interest in the debate was very high (see for example: Woffinden 1983, Tysoe 1983). The complete debate was broadcast live (on radio only) on July 13th by the B.B.C. whose decision to broadcast the entire debate when they did not do so for the previous debate in 1982 was a further indication of the high level of public interest in the debate (Rutherford 1983).

#### Background to capital punishment in the U.K

This section describes the background to capital punishment in the U.K. It is deliberately brief since background which the participants consider to be relevant is included in the discussion of their arguments. A longer discussion would itself be an argument (on one side of the debate or the other) and arguing for or against capital punishment is not the purpose of this chapter.

Capital punishment was abolished for the crime of murder in 1965 through the Murder (Abolition of the Death Penalty) Act 1965. The majority in favour of abolition was 185 (Hansard, 21st December 1964). Previous debates in the House of Commons in 1948 and in 1956 had also resulted in a vote for abolition but had been overturned by subsequent votes in the House of Lords. (Capital punishment is still technically available in England for crimes of treason, piracy and setting fire to dockyards and arsenals, but since 1918 (and only rarely before then) has not been used or considered in such cases.) The most recent debates on capital punishment in the House of Commons were in July 1979 and in May 1982 on motions supporting the re-introduction of the death penalty for various categories of murder. On every vote the majority against was not less than 100, for example, in 1979 the majority against the general re-introduction of capital punishment was 119, and in 1982 the majority against the general case was 162, and the majority against the re-introduction of capital punishment for murder through acts of terrorism was 124 (Weekly Hansard, 11th May 1982, Weekly Hansard, 19th July 1979). The number of homicide cases reported in the United Kingdom in 1982 was 619. Discussions of capital punishment in the United Kingdom can be found in (Ryan 1983), and (Blom-Cooper 1974) and one of the most comprehensive discussions of capital punishment is the report of the Royal Commission under Sir Ernest Gowers in 1953, Royal Commission on Capital Punishment 1953.

#### An influential debate?

It is important for the objectives of this chapter to carefully examine why this debate may be considered to have influenced M.P.'s

when voting as opposed to other influences. It has often been argued (Stacey 1975, Sedgemore 1980) that arguments on the floor of the House of Commons are becoming increasingly irrelevant in determining the outcome of any debate, when voting tactics and decisions are made prior to the event through the use of whips. A 'whip' is the expression used when party leaders instruct Members to vote in a particular way in a debate.

However issues such as capital punishment which fall outside the realm of government policy, are usually debated on the principle of a 'free vote', that is, each Member is free to vote as he wishes and there is no whip applied. Also neither party has a specific policy on the issue of capital punishment as it is usually considered to be a matter of conscience for each M.P. In this sort of circumstance the debate in the House often acts as the main focus for argument and decision, (see also Sedgemore's discussion of Private Members' Bills). Another pressure on M.P.'s was their recent election promises or speeches to their local constituency party. Edward Heath, for example, specifically advises them to ignore this pressure in his speech. Most of this pressure urged the undecided M.P.'s (who were mainly Conservative) to vote in favour of restoration.

The debate considered in this chapter was thought by most observers to be the closest that parliament has come to re-introducing capital punishment. For example the Guardian referred to:

" ... a House of Commons where opinion is more evenly divided than ever before..."

(Guardian, 12th July 1983)

and

"...The evidence continued to point rather shakily towards a defeat for the pro-hanging lobby..."  
(Guardian, 12th July 1983)

Similarly the Observer on the previous Sunday suggested that the vote would only be lost by 20 votes (Observer, 10th July 1983), and the Times later in the week suggested that the closest motion would only be lost by 10 or 20 votes (Times, 13th July 1983). Other papers whose editorial was more generally in support of the motion were more optimistic of victory by a few votes for the general motion, and some of the amendments. Opinion differed on which of the amendments would be the closest when it came to a vote. The amendment supporting murder for acts of terrorism and that supporting murder for shooting or causing an explosion were however the most frequently tipped as likely to be lost (or won) by just a handful of votes (Guardian, 11th July 1983, Guardian 12th July 1983). Hewitt in the 'New Statesman' similarly suggested that 'the motion most likely to succeed is execution for terrorist murder'. She further considers that even a narrow defeat for the restoration will be a sufficient 'victory' to keep the issue alive as a public topic for a further five years (Hewitt 1983). This latter point illustrates the importance of the debate to supporters of restoration since if the motion and amendments were once again defeated heavily, against the believed climate of public support for the motion, then there would be little likelihood of the topic's being considered again in the foreseeable future.

The potential closeness of the vote was thought by most commentators to be due to the arrival in the House of a large number of new (since

the general election) Conservative M.P.'s who were under pressure in their constituencies to support the motion, and many of whom it was felt would vote in favour. Edwina Currie (Conservative) perhaps most closely summed up in the debate the arguments which most commentators had suggested the new M.P's would support:

"Something is wrong. We seem to have become a lawless and dangerous society in which brutality no longer shocks but becomes commonplace, and in which the carrying of weapons of all kinds in the furtherance of crime has become an everyday matter. From many people there is the cry that something must be done. My sense of natural justice is offended by the feeling that there is no appropriate response. Why should decent citizens go in fear of their lives? If the abolition of capital punishment has anything to do with it or is in any way to blame, and if any criminal sees its disappearance as condoning his activity, its return may help to reverse this trend."

(c. 917)

In contrast the Labour Party representation (most Members of which had always voted against the restoration of the death penalty), was at its lowest level since 1930.

It was felt by most observers that the 'arguments on the day' could be particularly significant in persuading a sufficient number of these new Members one way or the other. The result as the debate started was considered to be very much in the balance. No-one suggested that the result would be anything like the large majority against restoration, after the debate in 1982.

The results of the divisions on the motion and amendments which began at 10pm were therefore a considerable surprise, and were as follows:

	<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>	<u>MAJ</u>
..... resulting from acts of terrorism	245	361	116
..... of a police officer in the course of his duties	263	344	81
..... of a prison officer during the course of his duties	252	348	96
..... by shooting or causing an explosion	204	374	170
..... in the course or furtherance of theft	194	369	175
This house favours the restoration of the death penalty for murder	233	368	135

Commentators and participants on the following day suggested that the debate had strongly influenced a large number of M.P.'s to vote against, where they had before the debate considered voting for at least one of the amendments. The Times on the following day (Times, 14th July 1983) suggested that the opening speech by the Home Secretary (Leon Brittain) had been ineffective and that his failure to give an adequate definition of acts of terrorism had led to the large swing against that amendment. Conversely it was argued that the speeches by Roy Hattersley the Labour Party spokesman on Home Affairs (Shadow Home Secretary), had been 'fluent and forceful', and that the contributions by Edward Heath (former Conservative Prime Minister (1970-1974), and Roy Jenkins (former Home Secretary 1974-76), were persuasive for the case against the re-introduction of capital punishment.

The rest of this chapter analyses and discusses the speeches made by these four principal contributors and the responses to them in terms



of the arguments that they use, as most of the available evidence points to these being significant events in determining the course of the debate and the final outcome.

Figure 6.1 shows the timetable of the early part of the debate.

Figure 6.2 lists the main speakers in the debate.

Figure 6.1      Timetable of the early part of the debate

- 3.31 pm.      Start of debate introduced by the Speaker
- Case for restoration presented by Sir Edward Gardiner
- 3.51 pm.      Summary of arguments and case for restoration for  
                 murder resulting from acts of terrorism, presented by  
                 Leon Brittain (Home Secretary).
- 4.20 pm.      Case against restoration put by Roy Hattersley.
- 4.45 pm.      Case against restoration put by Edward Heath.
- 5.03 pm.      Case against restoration put by Roy Jenkins
- 5.21 pm.      Case for restoration put by Edwina Currie.

Figure 6.2 Major speakers in the debate.

In order of debating sequence.

Sir Edward Gardiner (FOR)  
Leon Brittain (FOR)  
Roy Hattersley (AGAINST)  
Edward Heath (AGAINST)  
Roy Jenkins (AGAINST)  
Edwina Currie (FOR)  
Robert Kilroy-Silk (AGAINST)  
Sir Ian Percival (FOR)  
Jack Ashley (AGAINST)  
Albert McQuarrie (FOR)  
Leo Abse (AGAINST)  
Humphrey Atkins (FOR)  
Dame Judith Hart (AGAINST)  
Eldon Griffiths (FOR)  
John Hume (AGAINST)  
Rev. Ian Paisley (FOR)  
John Lewis (AGAINST)  
Sir Hugh Fraser (FOR)  
William Ross (FOR)  
Sir Ian Gilmour (AGAINST)  
Alex Carlile (AGAINST)  
Vivian Bendall (FOR)  
Renee Short (AGAINST)  
Terence Higgins (AGAINST)  
William W Hamilton (AGAINST)  
George Gardiner (FOR)  
Betty Boothroyd (FOR)  
Norman St. John-Stevas (AGAINST)  
Alfred Dubs (AGAINST)  
Merlyn Rees (AGAINST)  
Teddy Taylor (FOR)

### Research Methods

This setting is a further opportunity to look at the practice of argument in a situation in which verbal argument is a significant and potentially influential feature. The methods used are very similar to those described in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 for the collection of data and for the subsequent analysis. As with the study of the Crossman Diaries access to the participants was not possible, and the emphasis in using the data is on whether the data gathering, analysis and theories can improve an observer's understanding of the arguments and their effect, and add to knowledge on the nature of argument. In this chapter the use of cognitive mapping as a means of recording argument, and of being able to highlight the essential steps in an argument, and so more readily compare different arguments is stressed as this was a particularly helpful feature in working with the 'raw' data.

The entire debate was recorded on audio tape, from the B.B.C radio broadcast, with some notes made at the time on the background features of the debate, such as the immediate reactions to speeches in the House, the nature of interruptions, and the impression of the reception of a speech by others in the House. On the following days the reactions to the debate in the press, television and radio were closely monitored and recorded. The general approach follows that of Nelkin (1979) who with other colleagues has extensively observed public events and debates through written and broadcast media.

After re-studying the tapes and media material four speeches in the debate were selected for more detailed study on the basis that they were reported by observers and participants (see above section) as

being very influential in determining the outcome of the debate.

These were, as mentioned above, the speeches of:

Leon Brittain - Home Secretary (in favour of restoration for acts of terrorism)

Roy Hattersley - Labour Party Shadow Home Secretary (spoke against all the amendments).

Edward Heath - Former Prime Minister (spoke against all the amendments)

Roy Jenkins - Former Labour Party Home Secretary (spoke against all the amendments).

In each case cognitive maps were drawn up covering the speech, based on the audio tapes of the debate. The written record (Weekly Hansard, 13th July 1983) was used to clarify indistinct passages, and to check phrasing and references to other Members of Parliament (since names are not used in speeches in the House of Commons). The difficulties of a published written verbatim transcript as a base for interpreting a speech are well known (Axelrod 1976) and in the case of Hansard the volume of material, and lack of description of the events surrounding the speeches, can be mis-leading as to their impact at the time. Therefore the tapes form the primary source, and decisions of inclusion or exclusion of material was based on the taped source not the written record.

Each cognitive map was transferred to the computer as a separate model. Extracts from each of the models are shown as cognitive maps in the figures at the end of this chapter, and a full list of each model is given. The rarity of explicit opposite poles is noticeable in this coding. These were essentially the maps that resulted from coding the debate as it occurred. It may be that in a debate arguers

are anxious to stress the poles that they wish to put forward, and to (not necessarily consciously) leave unsaid the contrasts, since these contrasts may provide the basis for counter argument from opponents.

The chains of argument used in each speech were then compared and examined by exploring the respective cognitive maps, and each model was additionally analysed, key concepts selected and grouped (in the same way as described in Chapter 3). The groups or areas of interest are shown for each speech in Figure 6.11.

The analyses performed were:

**Cognitive centrality analysis:** This works through each concept and sums the number of concepts which are directly linked, either connotatively, or causally to a given concept. It is a guide to the amount of elaboration or discussion that there has been around each concept.

**Trace analysis:** The trace analysis examines for each concept the number of other concepts that can be affected by, or affect, the given concept. It represents the extent to which a given concept can influence or be influenced by other concepts.

**Path analysis:** The path analysis looks at each chain of reasoning or argument which stems from a given concept, and gives some indication of amount of support for or support given by a particular concept.

**Loop analysis:** This searches for and reports any circular arguments in a model.

Each concept which was in the top 10 percent of each of the Centrality, Trace and Path analyses was selected as a key concept, and thus used as the basis for automatically grouping the models into hierarchical clusters of concepts which form the explanatory structure around the key concepts.

Study of the models and the results of the analyses were then used as the starting point for looking at the interactions between the models, which represents the interaction between the speeches in terms of the arguments used. Discussion of other speeches in the debate, and the overall features of the debate were also included.

#### Arguments about capital punishment

Note that throughout the remaining sections of this chapter to avoid tedious repetition the following abbreviations are used: Speakers for the motion on the re-introduction of the death penalty, and any of the amendments, are referred to as 'supporters'. Speakers against the motion on the re-introduction of the death penalty are referred to as 'opponents'. The re-introduction of the death penalty is also referred to as 'restoration'.

#### Facts and statistics

Nearly every speaker in the debate (Figure 6.2) made some reference to crime statistics, and attempted to link their arguments to some aspect of these. For example, a number of supporters attempted to show that since abolition in 1965 the number of crimes of violence had risen dramatically, and attempted to establish a causal link between abolition and the violent crime rate. Opponents argued that

the figures were inconclusive, the rise in crime had begun in 1960 before abolition, and there was no causal link. As with many of the arguments described in this thesis the linking of a particular argument with a set of 'facts' is a very common persuasive technique, in this case facts in terms of crime statistics, for the charity officers (Chapter 5) facts in terms of their own experiences with volunteers. The persuasiveness of this tactic rests both upon the agreement that can be reached on the facts, and on the interpretation of these facts, that is, the support that they can offer to the argument. In this debate the facts as matters of historical record were generally agreed, but the support that such facts could give to an argument was differently argued by many speakers.

In this debate the use of statistics by supporters and opponents whilst prevalent seems to have been inconclusive in terms of deciding the outcome of the debate. A number of speakers expressed the uncertainty and inconclusive nature of the facts, and attempted consequently to rest their arguments on other bases. This was apparently a more serious problem for supporters than for opponents. This was put most clearly by Edward Heath in his speech:

51 statistics not an unambiguous guide .... clear evidence



4 case for capital punishment not proved beyond any shadow of doubt



1 capital punishment .... status quo

To change the status quo (abolition) more certain evidence than that available is needed, Heath argued. This was echoed by Hattersley who argued that:



"we ought to re-introduce hanging on more than a hunch"

Another phrase that was received very enthusiastically was:

"the only certain fact is that if hanging was not  
abolished in 1965 then 5 innocent men would be dead today"

The attention paid in the debate to the support or attack of arguments in relation to established facts and statistics is an illustration of the influence that general expectations of argument have on the nature of debate. Chapter 1 discussed the link between a desire for sure and certain knowledge and the concept of rationality and rational debate. It was suggested that these culturally bound and common aspects of construal influence the type of support that is considered to be adequate to support a proposition. 'Factual' support is often taken to be pre-eminent as a persuasive means, and the influence of particular examples can be considerable (see later in this chapter for one illustration of this). This is also linked to the notion of modality discussed in Chapter 2, following Toulmin. Both Heath and Hattersley introduce into their arguments a concept of the degree of certainty that is required for an M.P. to be persuaded on this issue. If the available factual evidence is seen to be ambiguous in its direct support, then arguers can attempt to define a setting in which this ambiguity is itself support for their case. Edward Heath and Edwina Currie did this from different sides of the argument.

Heath construed the debate as being about 'capital punishment rather than status quo', he could then argue that very certain evidence is required to change the status quo. The appeal of this argument rests

on the contrast between a state of affairs which is known (certain), the status quo, and an envisaged state of affairs which is less certain. It is a similar appeal to that described by Goodwin and Wenzel (1979) in their study of the logical reasoning implied in folk lore, where they quote the saying, "Better the devil that you know .....".

Currie on the other hand argues (see above quote) that because murder and violent crime are such hideous acts, if capital punishment can deter just one criminal from committing them it is worth re-introducing. This was supported by Atkins later in the debate who said that:

"If we can save even a few innocent lives - is it not our duty to do so?"

(c.933)

Currie and Atkins attempted to set up a context in which only minimal evidence is strong support for their case. They can thus argue against or nullify the problems of the inconclusive nature of the evidence as direct support for their arguments.

Thus by envisaging and arguing for different contexts for considering the 'facts' available, each side of the argument can use what was generally agreed to be inconclusive factual evidence, as strong support for their case.

### Consistency

Chapter 4 suggested that in conflictual debates of this nature internal consistency between aspects of an argument was a very

necessary feature of persuasive argument. Crossman by taking on new ideas about housing without fully thinking them through in relation to his construct system, created temporary discrepancies between different parts of his construct system which others were able to highlight and exploit. Brittain's arguments on each amendment show an inconsistency (as seen by a number of speakers in the debate) which was exploited by Hattersley. For example, on the amendment relating to murder committed in the course of theft, Brittain argued:

32 only minor theft may be involved ....

33 evidence for theft would be crucial ....

31 public debate and concern over individual cases ....

30 capital punishment for murder in course of theft .... imprisonment

This is one the many arguments (often called the 'anomaly' arguments) that were used in relation to the various categories of murder defined by the amendments.

In relation to the amendment for murder of a prisoner officer in the course of his duties, Brittain argued against capital punishment:

38 only two officers killed in 40 years ....

37 difficult to make judgement about effect of capital punishment ....

34 capital punishment for murder of prison officers .... no capital pun

However on the amendment relating to murder resulting from acts of terrorism Brittain argued in favour of restoration In this case he

suggested another argument, namely that the state must signify its repugnance of such acts.

In his speech against the motion and all amendments which directly followed Brittain (see timetable in Figure 6.1), Hattersley attempted to establish an inconsistency between Brittain's arguments. He did this by arguing that the two arguments that Brittain has used to reject capital punishment for other amendments also apply to the terrorist amendment. For example: The 'anomaly' argument also applied:

8 robberies to give support to IRA .... obvious acts of terrorism  
 ↓  
 9 problems of definition ....  
 ↓  
 10 chaos and anguish .....  
 ↓-  
 1 re-introduce hanging .... do not re-introduce hanging

The argument that not many murders are involved also applied:

4 terrorist crime in Northern Ireland ....  
 ↓  
 5 less than one quarter of all murders ....  
 ↓  
 6 deterring one in five murders .....  
 ↓  
 2 deterrent effect will be negligible .... significant deterrence  
 ↓-  
 1 re-introduce hanging .... do not re-introduce hanging

In this way Hattersley used his opponent's arguments to support his own, and significantly attempted to show that there was an inconsistency in Brittain's arguments. If these arguments apply to

the terrorist amendment then Brittain must reject this as well since these were precisely the arguments that Brittain used to reject other amendments.

The influence of this argument by Hattersley is indicated by the number of references by other speakers to this illustration of an inconsistency in the Home Secretary's arguments. There was, however, another line of argument against the Home Secretary which was also frequently used by speakers and this is discussed in the following section.

#### Expectations, argument and sociality

A number of speakers made reference to another feature of Brittain's speech. He suggested that in Northern Ireland a new system would need to be devised (other than the Diplock courts) to try capital cases, for example a judge and two assessors. Many speakers severely criticized this suggestion, not primarily because of the content, but because they argued that the way in which this suggestion was raised was inappropriate behaviour for a Home Secretary. Roy Jenkins perhaps emphasized this more than others, saying of the Home Secretary:

"He is floating a possible idea and not submitting a clear proposition. He has no idea whether the procedure of a judge and assessors would work, and he has no idea whether the judiciary would accept it ..... That is one of the most extraordinary propositions that a Home Secretary or any other Cabinet Minister has ever put before the House."  
(c.914)

This argument is based on a construal by Jenkins of how other Members expect senior Members of the House to behave. There is an implication

that 'floating an idea' is not acceptable behaviour for a Home Secretary. It is not the feasibility of the idea that is under attack (this was attempted by Heath), but the way in which it has been put forward. This was an effective means of undermining Brittain's credibility in the debate, judging by the number of Members who make a similar reference to the 'sorry performance of the Home Secretary'. For example:

" .... it causes me grave discomfort that a Home Secretary ..."  
(Leo Abse, c. 929)

" .... with all respect to him, that is not something that should come from the Home Secretary. It might come from me or one of my right hon. or hon. Friends on the Back Benches ....

(Sir Ian Gilmour, c.948)

This argument relies upon each Member similarly construing the way in which a Home Secretary should act in a debate and the kind of arguments that he should bring forward.

Such construals are based on the history and practice of Parliament as it is experienced by each Member, and for some are undoubtedly linked to important values concerned with the nature of Parliamentary activity. This form of attack would not have been effective (and was not used) against any other Member taking part in the debate, although a number of proposals were made which were similarly 'floated'. Perhaps because he was relatively new to the position of Home Secretary, Brittain had not fully developed an appropriate template for presenting his arguments as a Home Secretary, rather than as a more junior member of the Government. That is to say that he was not able to

adequately play a social role in respect of other Members in his new position, because he had not been able to empathize with their view of his role.

Similarly, Richard Crossman (Chapter 4) was unable to play a social role in respect of his 'amenity lobby' opponents, and was unable to effectively anticipate their arguments. Brittain's difficulties in this aspect of his arguments illustrate quite vividly the implications, as discussed in Chapter 2, of the Sociality corollary when attempting to present arguments which are intended to persuade others.

Another difficulty arose for Brittain from 'floating an idea' in that when asked by a number of speakers to clarify the points he was making he was apparently reluctant to respond. There does seem to be a need in argument of this sort, not only to prepare arguments beforehand, but also to be responsive to points made during the debate. In Chapter 5 the effective arguers were described as those officers who were able to link their arguments to points previously made, which is also a reflection of a need to be sensitive to the current debate.

### Values

It might be expected that in a debate which often aroused deep emotion, that the values of speakers and audience would play a significant role in the debate. The group analysis of the four speakers considered by many to be the most influential shows however that the areas of interest tackled in their speeches focusses more on the practicalities of capital punishment.

Hattersley's model is the only one to lay some emphasis on the moral and value-laden aspects of the motion. For instance there are groups around the concepts 'debases us all' and 'degrades society'. This is not to say that these issues are not mentioned by the other speakers, but that group analysis suggests that they form a less significant part of the speeches.

At issue here is the relation of values to persuasion. This has been frequently researched in terms of mass 'laboratory' style experiments, and for example Meltsner (Meltsner 1979) quotes Berelson and Steiner's generalizations to the effect that:

"people respond to persuasive communications in line with their pre-dispositions, and they change or resist change accordingly"

(Meltsner 1979)

That is to say that the values we hold pre-dispose us to particular arguments. At the extreme, as has been argued in Chapter 1, differences in values will lead to a state in which neither arguer can play a social role in respect of the other, there can be no argument between them. In this debate there was clearly one major group of M.P.'s (like Hattersley) who were opposed to capital punishment on moral grounds, and primarily opposed the motion for that reason. However their task is to persuade M.P.'s who do not hold such a moral commitment to support them. In this task, whilst it is important to express their moral commitment, this is not likely to be the primary means of persuasion for influencing un-decided M.P.'s.

So for example, both Heath and Jenkins (and others) concentrate



upon the practicalities of capital punishment as an effective deterrent rather than on the moral arguments. Hattersley does make some attempt to win the moral argument, and in doing so, points to the effect of sharing or not sharing values with the source of the argument.

For example:

- 19 Sun is not part of liberal enlightened establishment ....
- ↓
- 18 article in Sun newspaper regards hanging as brutalising ....
- ↓
- 17 degrades society ....
- ↓
- 3 debases us all ....
- ↓ -
- 1 re-introduce hanging .... do not re-introduce hanging

Concept 19 is the crucial part of this argument, in that, it brings to mind the editorial policy of the Sun, which is usually regarded as a strident supporter of the Conservative party, and more generally a supporter of right wing policies. By introducing this example Hattersley argues that undecided M.P.s' can easily reject the arguments put forward by 'the Bar, the Bench and the Bishops' since these espouse values of the 'enlightened liberal establishment' which are not likely to be shared by the new Conservative M.P.s'. However the same argument put forward by the Sun newspaper cannot be so easily rejected, as the Sun frequently espouses values which the Conservative M.P.s support.

This agrees with the work of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) who argue that the audience's values are significant both in affecting the nature of the arguments that they will find persuasive, and the credibility that will be attached to the source of an argument.

The note of caution in respect of a discussion of values sounded in Chapter 1 must however be repeated here. In terms of persuasion of individuals it is difficult to talk in terms of values in the global, wide ranging sense that they tend to be used in this section. Individual values are (as shown in Chapter 3) particular and idiosyncratic. Therefore the effect of shared values (at a general level) between an individual and groups in society can really only be seen as affecting the 'climate' in which an argument is received. This as suggested by Meltsner affects an individual's pre-disposition to any particular argument, but is not critical in terms of persuading him.

The opponents of capital punishment by focussing on other aspects than the moral issues, reflect this understanding of the working of values when used at this general level. Also values related to moral aspects of life, which form a deep-seated part of an individual's construct system will be as Kelly suggests resistant to change, because of the consequences for the rest of the system that such a change would entail. It is unlikely then that deeply held values will be sufficiently influenced by a single debate (although of course there are isolated examples to the contrary).

This argument is additionally interesting because it relies crucially on being able to construe, at a very general level, others' reactions to the Sun newspaper. These reactions form part of a taken-for-granted social world. The argument relies both on finding support for a point of view from groups with which the audience may share values, and on being able to access construal common to large numbers of individuals involving aspects of social life. Another common example of this type of argument was seen in the press prior to the debate, with the reported statements of relatives of murder victims arguing against capital punishment.

#### Countering assertions

We have seen previously that Brittain supported the re-introduction of hanging for acts of terrorism, partly on the grounds that it was right for society to signal its repugnance of this type of crime. He also argued that it would deter terrorists. The likelihood of deterrence occurred as a critical feature in many of the arguments. Brittain argued that:

17 many people are bullied or bribed into acts of terrorism ....

15 not all terrorists are fanatics ....

16 must not accept terrorists view of himself ....

14 risk of capital punishment will deter terrorists ....

Conversely Hattersley argued:

31 hunger strikes by IRA prisoners ....



38 terrorists are not weak and undetermined ....



31 deterrent effect of hanging

The question is, which of these arguments will be accepted by those who are unpersuaded? From the reactions in the House at the time and the unexpectedly heavy vote against the terrorist amendment, it seems likely that Hattersley was more influential than Brittain. Hattersley points to a relatively recent event as support for his proposition, Brittain provides none, but relies on implying that terrorists are in some way particularly liable to 'fear of consequences'. It is an appeal perhaps to what the audience would like to believe, that is, that terrorists are 'weak and cowardly'. These are two contrasting assertions about the nature of terrorists, and in this case, a recent event strongly suggests that one interpretation is more likely. So again Brittain's argument is seen as the weaker one. If there had been, for example, a recent instance of the I.R.A backing down under pressure, then perhaps the arguments would have been differently received.

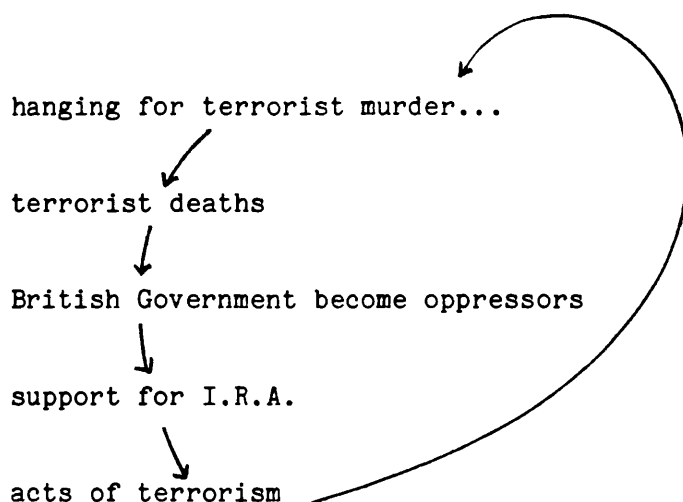
Of note here is the influence of a particular event in determining a general interpretation of I.R.A terrorists, almost regardless of any other evidence which may be relevant to the interpretation. It is a further and quite striking illustration of the pre-eminence given to events and facts in deciding

between propositions. It is similar to the strength that particular anecdotes had for charity officers (Chapter 5) in supporting arguments about volunteers.

Vicious circles and inevitable consequences

Chapter 5 described the influence on the course of a debate of the presentation of arguments which imply that there are inevitable or unchangable consequences in a particular setting. The identification of circular argument (sometimes called vicious circles) often points to this type of effect. During his speech (and this argument was also used by others), Hattersley argues that:

(on following page)



Thus restoration will lead to this vicious circle, in which capital punishment increasingly escalates violence. The strength in terms of the ability to persuade, lies (as in Chapter 5) with the concept of inevitability that such a circular argument implies. There is no escape from the consequences if hanging is re-introduced is the underlying implication of the argument.

Note that if the alternative poles were explicit then the re-generative aspects of the loop may be apparent. However these are not expressed, and it would matter (for the opposite argument) what these were. For example if the alternative to hanging is [not] hanging then this is a reflection of the current state of affairs, and this would not be a particularly strong counter argument, since current acts of terrorism are the basis for the argument.

Arguers for restoration had to tackle this circle, and chose a number of different ways of doing it, which are similar to the strategies discussed in Chapter 5. For example, one of the links may be reversed, so changing the argument to support the

opposite case. For example Leon Brittain was one of many who argued that capital punishment would deter support for terrorists. If this link is substituted then the argument is reversed.

Alternatively attempts can be made to lessen the significance of the loop (if it cannot be effectively broken) by arguing that there are other factors involved. For example, Humphrey Atkins argued that the I.R.A. 'can always find martyrs' (eg. the hunger strikes), and whether they find them through restoration or some other means is not significant. This then enabled him to discuss other reasons for restoration.

This vicious circle acted throughout the debate (in slightly different forms) as an important persuasive argument for the opponents. Perhaps the failure of supporters to effectively tackle this loop, rather than to deflect attention from it was a significant contribution to their failure to win the debate.

Typical deflecting arguments were (in summary):

The state should signify its repugnance no matter what the consequences (Leon Brittain).

The I.R.A will create martyrs anyway. (Humphrey Atkins).

We should not be deterred from doing what is right (Humphrey Atkins).

Hanging is a just punishment for terrorist no matter what (Sir Ian Percival).

### Summary of Chapter 6

Argument designed to persuade

The occurrence of what was generally believed to be a very influential debate on capital punishment in the House of Commons provided an opportunity to look at arguments which were probably the most carefully prepared and designed of those considered in this thesis. Most observers prior to the debate felt that the result on at least some of the amendments would be very close, and that the arguments 'on the day' could be decisive in persuading many M.P's to support or oppose the motion. This was therefore an interesting example for the study of argument.

The final votes produced large majorities against the main motion and all of the amendments, and were a considerable surprise for participants and observers alike. Later comment suggested that a poor performance by Leon Brittain the Home Secretary who spoke in favour of the restoration of the death penalty for murder by acts of terrorism, and contrastingly strong arguments by opponents such as Edward Heath, Roy Hattersley, and Roy Jenkins were major influences on the outcome. This chapter explored the features of these arguments, and some other aspects of the debate which made them 'weak' or 'strong'.

A large number of speakers linked their case to the factual evidence that was available. Generally speaking the inconclusive nature of this evidence acted in favour of opponents, since they argued that more certainty was needed to take the drastic step



of restoration. Some supporters however attempted to define a context in which this modality could be lessened. That is they argued that murder was such a hideous act that even if only a few lives could be saved, it was worth re-introducing the death penalty. This aspect of the debate emphasized the influence on debate of factual evidence, and showed the role that the context of the argument has in determining acceptable levels of 'certainty' or modality.

In establishing inconsistencies in the Home Secretary's arguments, Roy Hattersley seriously damaged the credibility of the former's arguments. In many ways this interaction is similar to that between Crossman and his opponents, and like Crossman, Brittain attempted to argue that 'terrorism' was a special case, and thus protect his arguments from the charges of inconsistency.

Also damaging for Leon Brittain was his failure to adequately construe the expectations of the House about the nature of the arguments expected from him in his relatively new role as Home Secretary. In the same way that Crossman failed to anticipate the reactions to his decision over Hartley, Leon Brittain had somehow failed to form an adequate model of his audience in relation to the arguments that he needed to prepare.

The strategies chosen in this debate also reveal another interesting point about sociality. In the main, opponents who were generally opposed to capital punishment on strongly held moral principles, chose not to emphasize these. They focussed instead on practical issues such as the deterrent effect of

capital punishment. This strategy suggests that they believe that the undecided M.P.'s hold different values to themselves on this issue. Therefore no persuasive argument is possible on this basis, since they are not able to play a social role with respect to each other in the context of these values.

As in other settings some circular arguments were identified, these had a persuasive effect because they implied that the argument has an inevitable outcome. A change can only come about if the circle is broken in some way. Some ways of counteracting these 'loops' are discussed in terms of argument strategy, but failure to adequately challenge a loop of this sort, set up by opponents, marked a weakening of the cases of the supporters.

More than any other setting this debate emphasized the difficulties that anyone wishing to persuade others by argument faces. Those involved were well aware that their arguments could be crucial, for example, Leon Brittain is reported to have spent many hours preparing his 40 minute speech. Yet Brittain's speech was for many a weak case, and certainly failed in its ostensible task. The task of arguing persuasively is complex and uncertain and research which can provide assistance for arguers is surely needed.

Figure 6.3 Part of map for Leon Brittain

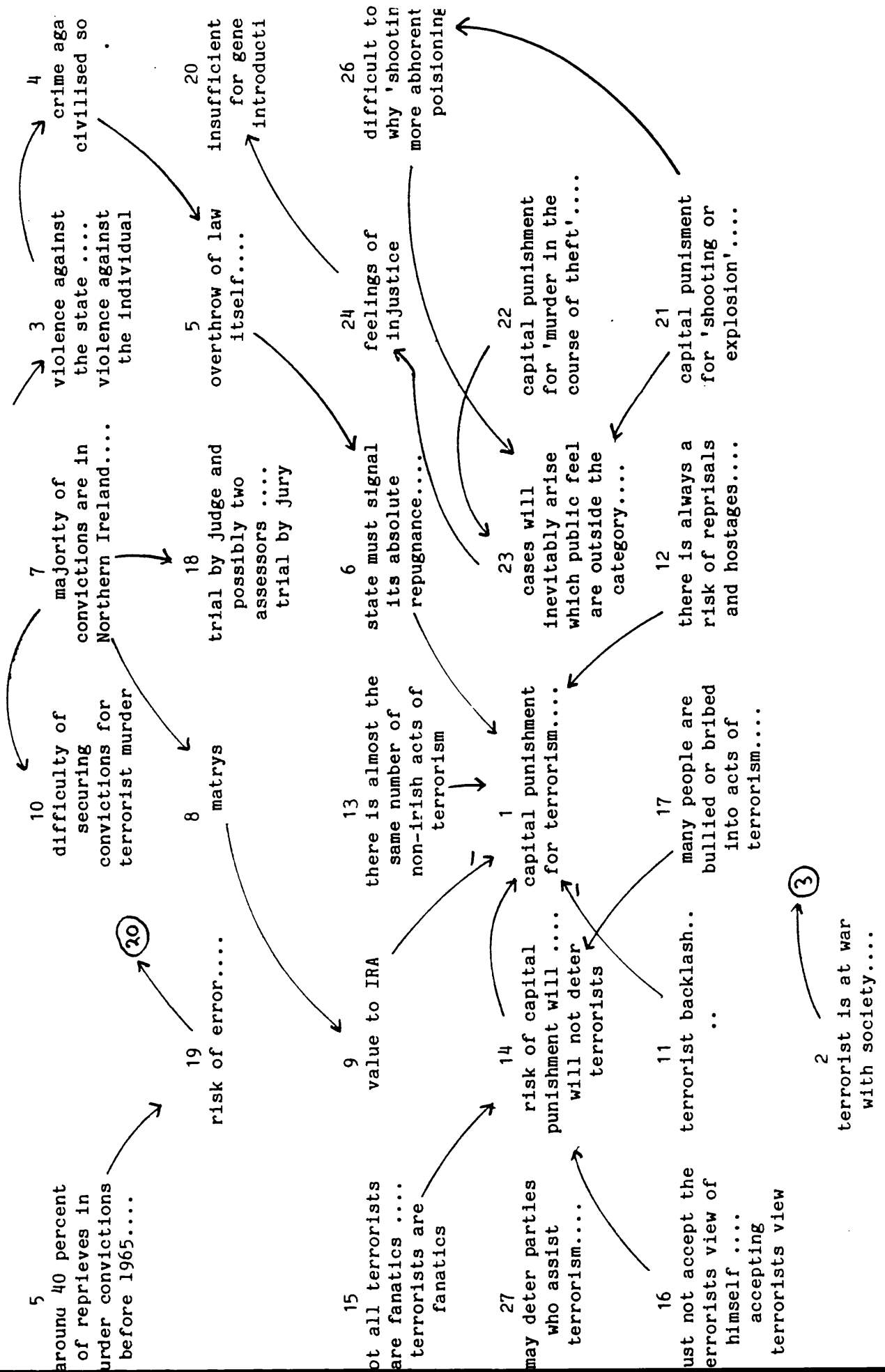


Figure 6.4 Part of map for Edward Heath

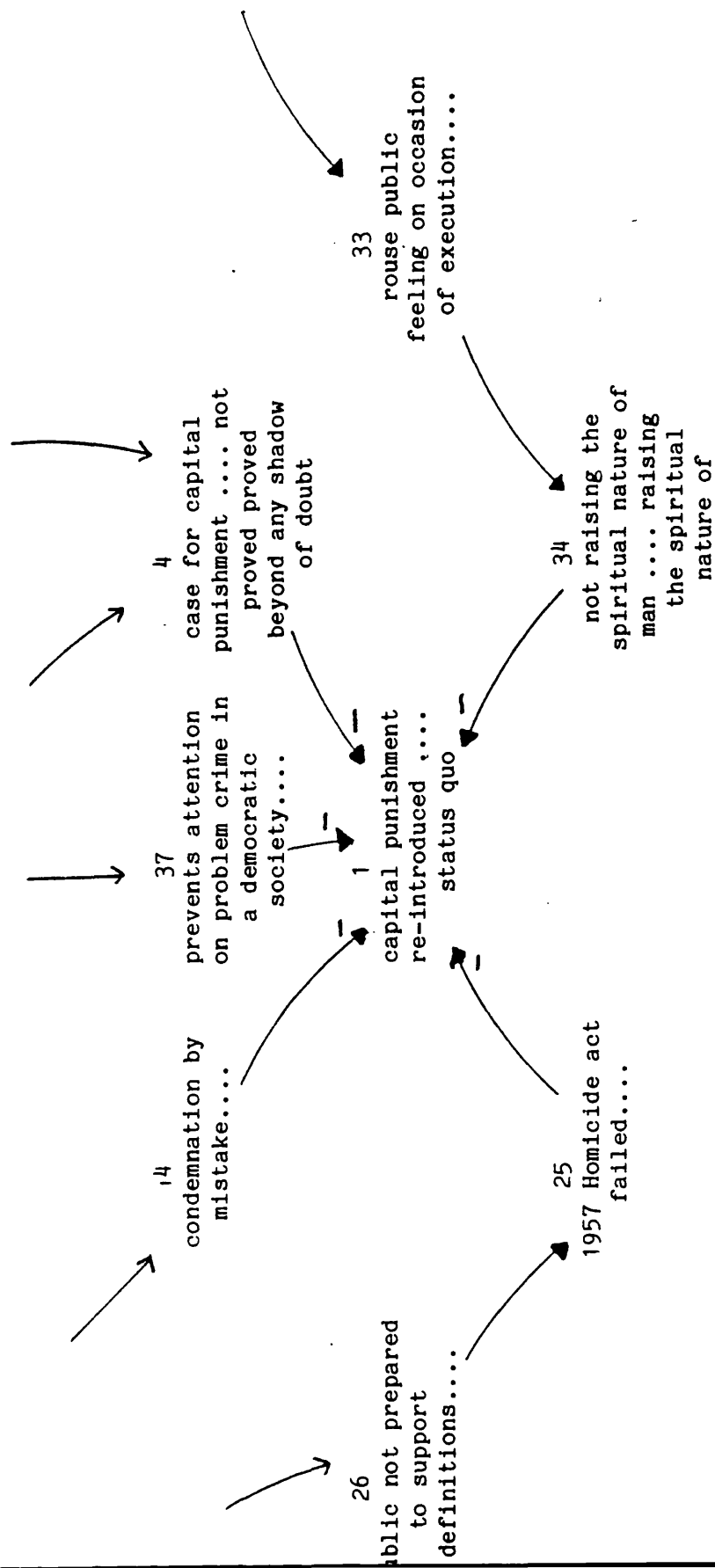


Figure 6.4 (continued)

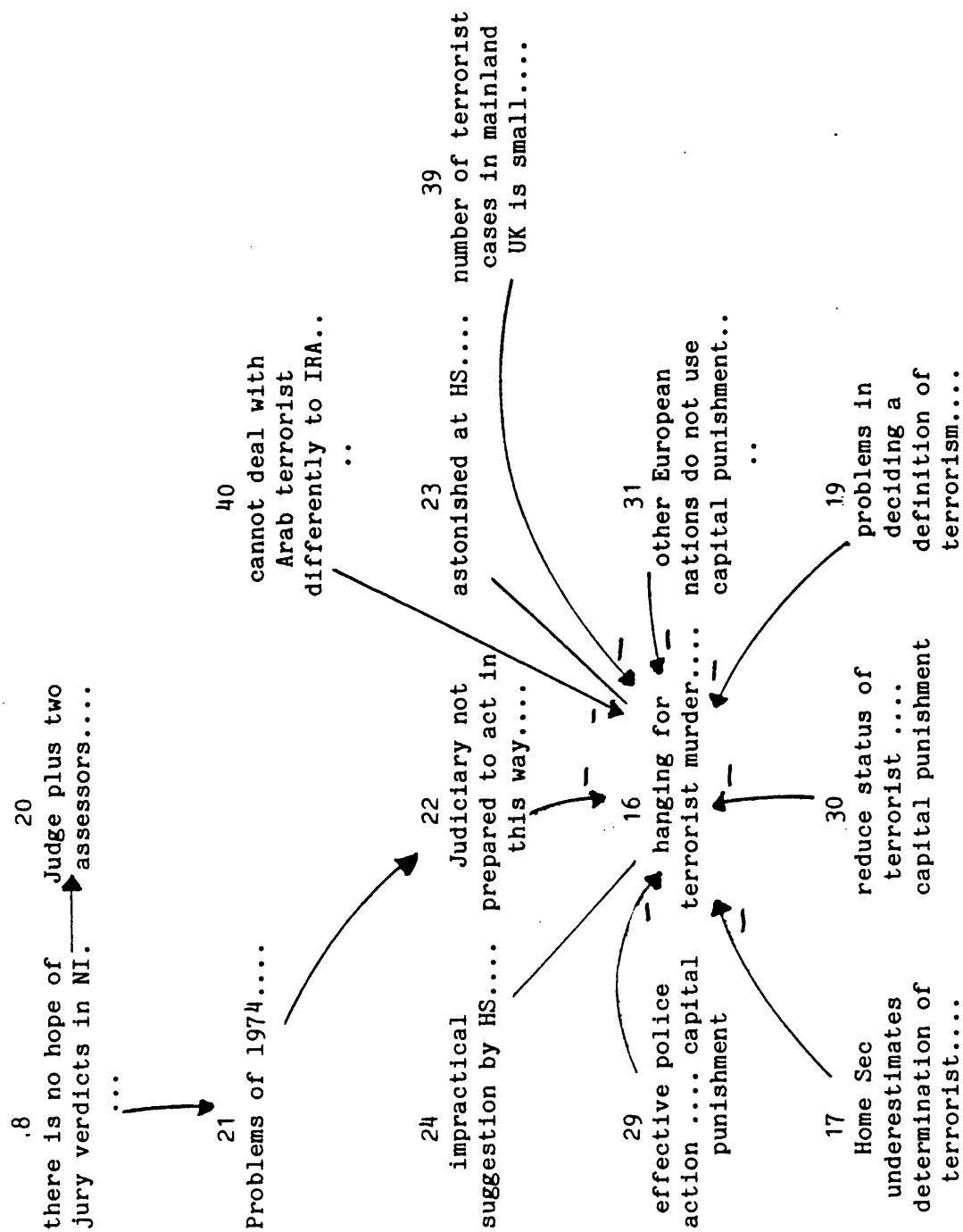


Figure 6.5 Part of map for Roy Hattersley

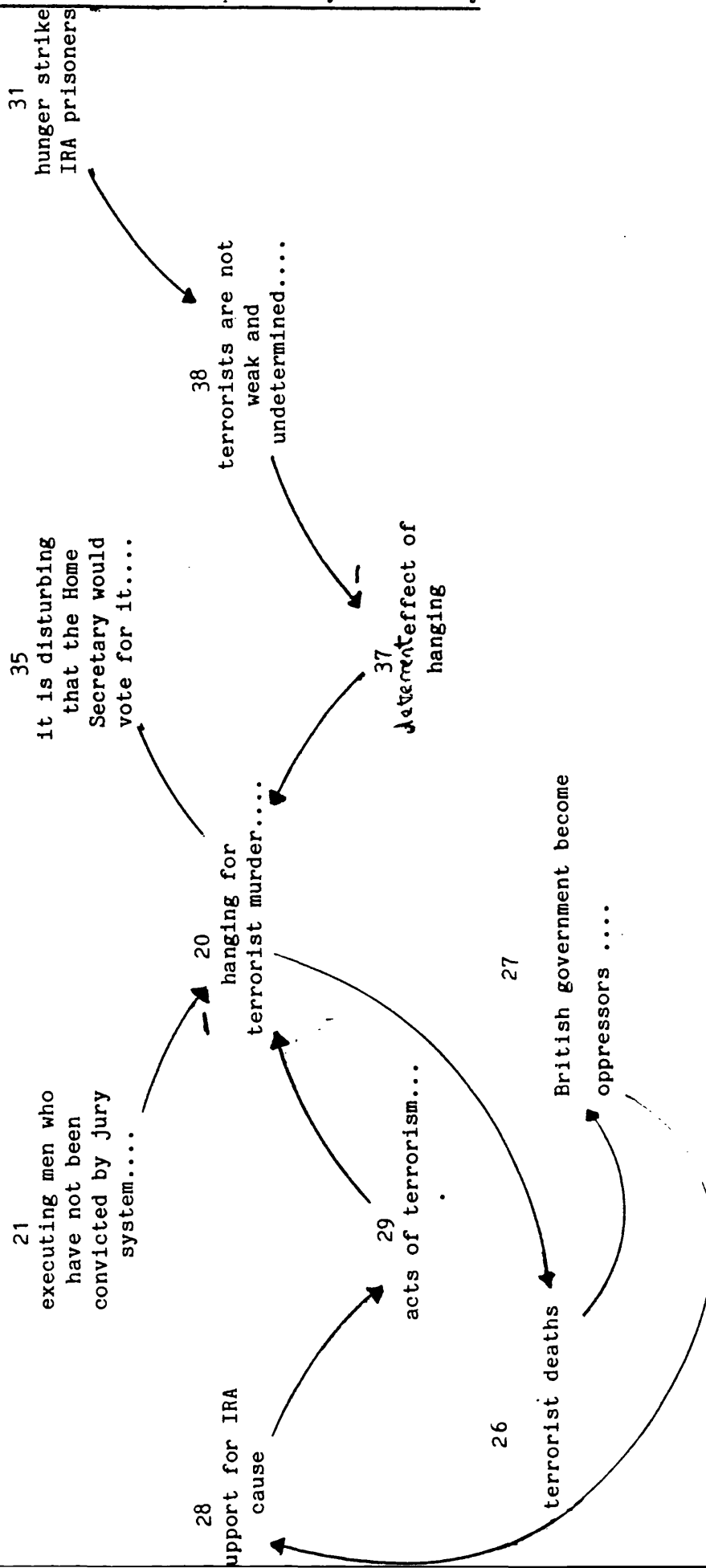


Figure 6.5 (continued)

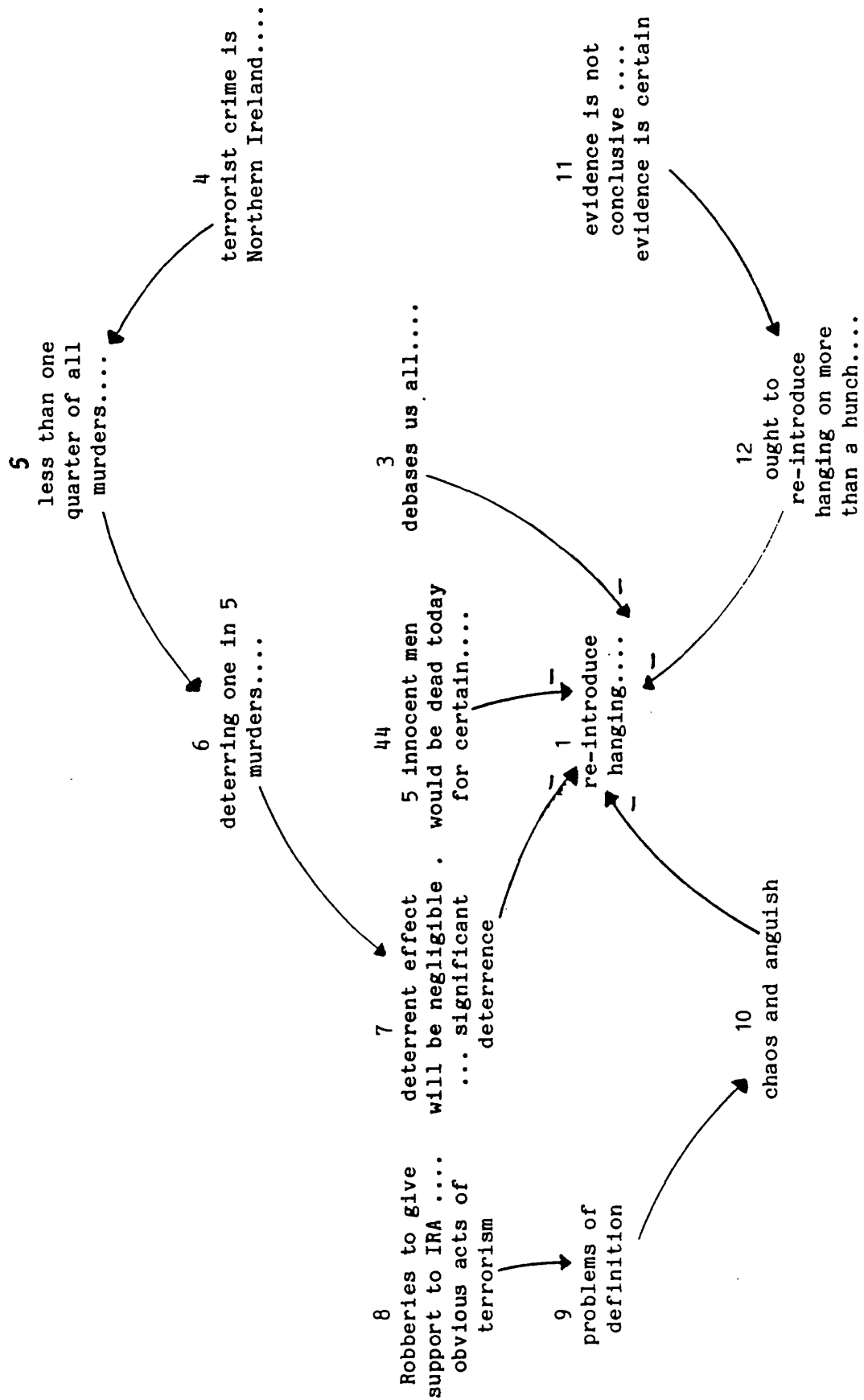


Figure 6.6 Part of map for Roy Jenkins

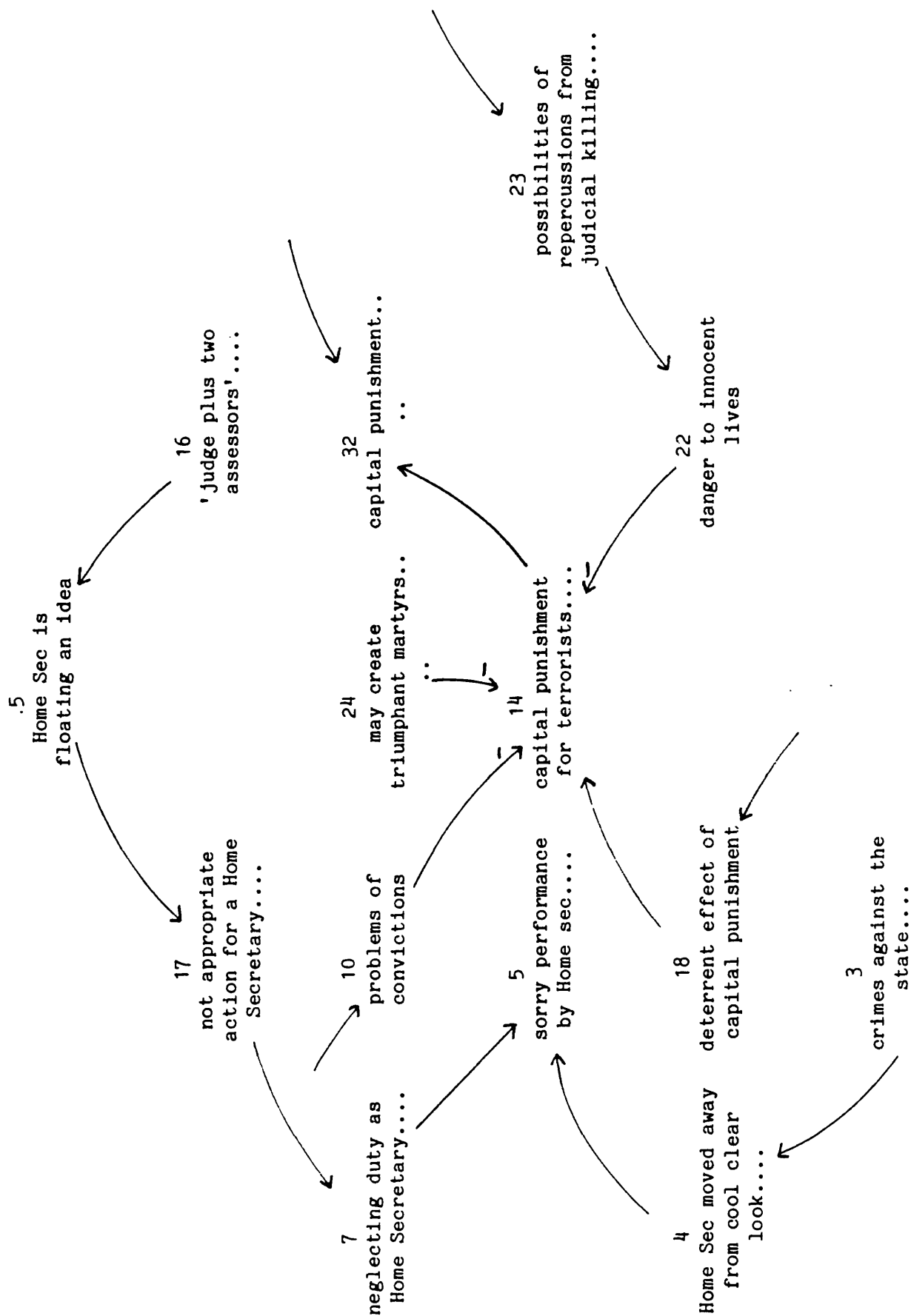




Figure 6.7 List of model for Leon Brittain

1 capital punishment for terrorism. . [not]capital punishment for terrorism  
 2 terrorist is at war with society. . [not]terrorist is at war with society  
 3 violence against the state . . . . .violence against the individual  
 4 crime against civilised society . . [not]crime against civilised society  
 5 overthrow of law itself . . . . . [not]overthrow of law itself  
 6 state must signal its absolute repugnance . .[not]state must signal its a  
 7 majority of convictions are in Northern Ireland . .[not]majority of convi  
 8 [+]martys . . . . . [-]martys  
 9 [+]value to IRA . . . . . [-]value to IRA  
 10 [+]difficulty of securing convictions for terrorist murder. . [-]difficul  
 11 terrorist backlash . . . . . [not]terrorist backlash  
 12 there is always a risk of reprisals and hostages . . [not]there is always  
 13 [+]there is almost the same number of non-Irish acts of terrorism . . [-]t  
 14 risk of capital punishment will . . . . .will not: deter terrorists  
 15 not all terrorists are fanatics . . . . .terrorists are fanatics  
 16 must not accept the terrorists view of himself .accepting terrorists view  
 17 many people are bullied or bribed into acts of terrorism. . [not]many peo  
 18 trial by judge and possibly two assessors . . . . .trial by jury  
 19 risk of error . . . . . [not]risk of error  
 20 insufficient basis for general introduction . .[not]insufficient basis fo  
 21 capital punishment for 'shooting or explosion' . .[not]capital punishment f  
 22 capital punishment for 'murder in the course of theft'. . [not]capital pu  
 23 cases will inevitably arise which public feel are outside the category .  
 24 [+]feelings of injustice. . . . . [-]feelings of injustice  
 25 around 40 percent of reprieves in murder convictions before 1965. . [not]  
 26 difficult to see why 'shooting' is more abhorrent than pois-oning. . [not]  
 27 may deter parties who assist terrorism. . [not]may deter parties who assi

Figure 6.8 List of model for Roy Hattersley

1 re-introduce hanging . . . . .[not]re-introduce hanging  
 2 hanging is a reversion to barbarism . . . .some murderers deserve to die  
 3 debases us all . . . . .[not]debases us all  
 4 terrorist crime is Northern Ireland . .[not]terrorist crime is Northern I  
 5 less than one quarter of all murders. . [not]less than one quarter of all  
 6 deterring one in 5 murders . . . . .[not]deterring one in 5 murders  
 7 deterrent effect will be negligible . . . . . significant deterrence  
 8 Robberies to give support to IRA . . . . .obvious acts of terrorism  
 9 [+]problems of definition . . . . .[-]problems of definition  
 10 [+]chaos and anguish. . . . .[-]chaos and anguish  
 11 evidence is not conclusive . . . . .evidence is certain  
 12 ought to re-introduce hanging on more than a hunch. . [not]ought to re-in  
 13 hanging lobby . . . . . [not]hanging lobby  
 14 hanging is a solution for all crimes. . [not]hanging is a solution for al  
 15 effort on crime is mis-directed . . . . effort on certainty of detection  
 16 the act of judicial execution . . . . [not]the act of judicial execution  
 17 degrades society . . . . .[not]degrades society  
 18 even article in Sun newspaper regards hanging as brutalising. . [not]even  
 19 [+]Sun is not part of enlightened liberal establishment . .[-]Sun is not  
 20 hanging for terrorist murder . . . . .[not]hanging for terrorist murder  
 21 executing men who have not been convicted by jury system. . [not]executin  
 22 [+]for terrorist murders we are thinking of Northern Ireland. . [-]for te  
 23 concedes IRA's most passionate demand . .[not]concedes IRA's most passion  
 24 terrorist crimes will be treated differently to any others. . [not]terror  
 25 distinction would be made between terrorists and common criminals . .[not]  
 26 terrorist deaths . . . . .[not]terrorist deaths  
 27 British government become oppressors. . [not]British government become op  
 28 [+]support for IRA cause. . . . .[-]support for IRA cause  
 29 acts of terrorism . . . . . [not]acts of terrorism  
 30 . wholly unacceptable . . . . . [not]wholly unacceptable  
 31 hunger strikes by IRA prisoners . . [not]hunger strikes by IRA prisoners  
 32 IRA have persuaded men to die . . . . [not]IRA have persuaded men to die  
 33 IRA have no concern for human life including their own. . [not]IRA have n  
 35 it is disturbing that the Home Secretary would vote for it . . [not]it is  
 36 office of Home Secretary . . . . .[not]office of Home Secretary  
 37 [+]derrent effect of hanging. . . . .[-]derrent effect of hanging  
 38 terrorists are not weak and undetermined . . [not]terrorists are not weak  
 39 violence by state is same as violence by individual . .[not]violence by s  
 40 legalize violence . . . . . [not]legalize violence  
 41 violence becomes accepted and institutionalised . .[not]violence becomes  
 42 more violent. . . . .civilised: society  
 43 if hanging had not been abolished in 1964 . .[not]if hanging had not been  
 44 5 innocent men would be dead today for certain. . [not]5 innocent men wou

Figure 6.9 List of model for Edward Heath

1 capital punishment re-introduced . . . . . status quo  
 2 there have now been 20 years of abolition . .[not]there have now been 20  
 3 onus of proof rests with proposers . . . . . onus of proof with opponents  
 4 case for capital punishment not proved: proved beyond any shadow of doubt  
 5 demand for retribution and revenge. . [not]demand for retribution and rev  
 6 unacceptable from moral point of view . .[not]unacceptable from moral poi  
 7 not a matter for House of Commons . .[not]not a matter for House of Commo  
 8 increase in homicides began before death penalty . .began after abolition  
 9 confusion in public mind . . . . . [not]confusion in public mind  
 10 [+]pressure for hanging . . . . . [-]pressure for hanging  
 11 large rise in lesser crimes . . . . . [not]large rise in lesser crimes  
 12 decision cannot rest on instinct. . [not]decision cannot rest on instinct  
 13 death penalty is irreversible . . . . [not]death penalty is irreversible  
 14 condemnation by mistake . . . . . [not]condemnation by mistake  
 15 'is he prepared to hang by mistake' . .[not]'is he prepared to hang by mi  
 16 hanging for terrorist murder . . . . . [not]hanging for terrorist murder  
 17 Home Sec underestimates determination of terrorist. . [not]Home Sec under  
 18 there is no hope of jury verdicts in NI . .[not]there is no hope of jury  
 19 problems in deciding a definition of terrorism. . [not]problems in decidi  
 20 Judge plus two assessors . . . . . [not]Judge plus two assessors  
 21 Problems of 1974 . . . . . [not]Problems of 1974  
 22 Judiciary not prepared to act in this way . .[not]Judiciary not prepared  
 23 astonished at HS . . . . . [not]astonished at HS  
 24 impractical suggestion by HS . . . . . [not]impractical suggestion by HS  
 25 1957 Homicide act failed . . . . . [not]1957 Homicide act failed  
 26 public not prepared to support definitions. . [not]public not prepared to  
 27 one kind of murder is worthy of penalty another is not. . [not]one kind o  
 28 [+]specific cases debated . . . . . [-]specific cases debated  
 29 effective police action . . . . . capital punishment  
 30 reduce status of terrorist . . . . . capital punishment  
 31 other European nations do not use capital punishment. . [not]other Europe  
 32 growth of media in last 20 years. . [not]growth of media in last 20 years  
 33 rouse public feeling on occasion of execution . .[not]rouse public feelin  
 34 not raising the spiritual nature of man .raising the spiritual nature of  
 35 horrifying stories from USA . . . . . [not]horrifying stories from USA  
 36 emphasis on capital punishment . . . . [not]emphasis on capital punishment  
 37 prevents attention on problem crime in a democratic society . .[not]preve  
 38 'hanging and flogging' . . . . . [not]'hanging and flogging'  
 39 number of terrorist cases in mainland UK is small . .[not]number of terro  
 40 cannot deal with Arab terrorist differently to IRA. . [not]cannot deal wi

Figure 6.10 List of model for Roy Jenkins

1 Home Sec destroyed case on all amendments accepts terrorists. . [not]Home  
 2 coolly and rationally . . . . .emotional  
 3 crimes against the state . . . . .[not]crimes against the state  
 4 Home Sec moved away from cool clear look. . [not]Home Sec moved away from  
 5 sorry performance by Home Sec . . . . [not]sorry performance by Home Sec  
 6 other crimes are not regarded by Home Sec with same repugnance. . [not]ot  
 7 neglecting duty as Home Secretary . [not]neglecting duty as Home Secreta  
 8 Threat from NI 600 times as great as on mainland. . [not]Threat from NI 6  
 9 capital punishment in GB only . . . . . capital punishment in GB and NI  
 10 [+]problems of convictions. . . . . [-]problems of convictions  
 11 Diplock courts . . . . .[not]Diplock courts  
 12 would be hanging someone for first time in centuries without jury . [not]  
 13 cannot get jury conviction for terrorism in NI. . [not]cannot get jury co  
 14 capital punishment for terrorists . [not]capital punishment for terroris  
 15 [+]Home Sec is floating an idea . . . . [-]Home Sec is floating an idea  
 16 'judge plus two assessors' . . . . .[not]'judge plus two assessors'  
 17 not appropriate action for a Home Secretary . [not]not appropriate actio  
 18 [+]deterrent effect of capital punishment . [-]deterrent effect of capit  
 19 cannot hang supporters . . . . .[not]cannot hang supporters  
 20 boys and women and grandmothers . . [not]boys and women and grandmothers  
 21 cannot deter 'baggage' . . . . .[not]cannot deter 'baggage'  
 22 [+]danger to innocent lives . . . . . [-]danger to innocent lives  
 23 possibilities of repercussions from judicial killing. . [not]possibilitie  
 24 may create triumphant martyrs . . . . [not]may create triumphant martyrs  
 25 go back to trial by jury in NI . . . . [not]go back to trial by jury in NI  
 26 majority will be acquitted . . . . .[not]majority will be acquitted  
 27 they will carry on their nefarious trade. . [not]they will carry on their  
 28 hunger strikes . . . . .[not]hunger strikes  
 29 terrorists willing to kill themselves . [not]terrorists willing to kill  
 30 terrorist willingness to die . . . . .[not]terrorist willingness to die  
 31 position of funeral in IRA mythology. . [not]position of funeral in IRA m  
 32 capital punishment . . . . .[not]capital punishment  
 33 years of experience as Home Sec . . [not]years of experience as Home Sec  
 34 there were many capital cases where conviction was clearly wrong . [not]  
 35 cases where there was a lingering flicker of doubt. . [not]cases where th  
 36 too high uncertainty . . . . . acceptable doubt  
 37 execution of terrorists in Spain. . [not]execution of terrorists in Spain  
 38 nine policeman killed in reprisal . [not]nine policeman killed in repris  
 39 [+]the finality of punishment is too great for the certainty of human jud

Figure 6.11      Group structure of models based on speeches

MODEL OF LEON BRITAIN'S SPEECH

Groups

- G1      capital punishment for terrorism \$1
- G2      terrorist is at war with society \$14
- G3      insufficient basis for general introduction \$20

HIERARCHY

- G1      capital punishment for terrorism \$1
- G2      terrorist is at war with society \$14

Model of Roy Hattersley's speech

Groups

- G1      debases us all \$3
- G2      re-introduce hanging \$1
- G3      hanging for terrorist murder \$20
- G4      degrades society \$17

HIERARCHY

- G1      debases us all \$3
- G4      degrades society \$17
- G2      re-introduce hanging \$1
- G1      debases us all \$3
- G3      hanging for terrorist murder \$20
- G1      debases us all \$3

Figure 6.11 (continued)

model for ROY JENKINSGROUP HIERARCHY

- G1 capital punishment for terrorists \$14
  - G2 problems of convictions \$10
  - G3 deterrent effect of capital punishment \$18
- G2 problems of convictions \$10
  - G7 cannot get jury conviction for terrorism in NI \$13
- G4 capital punishment \$32
  - G1 capital punishment for terrorists \$14
- G5 sorry performance by Home sec \$5
  - G6 neglecting duty as Home Secretary \$7
- G6 neglecting duty as Home Secretary \$7
  - G5 sorry performance by Home sec \$5

HEATHGROUP HIERARCHY

- G1 hanging for terrorist murder \$16
  - G5 astonished at HS \$23
  - G6 impractical suggestion by HS \$24
- G2 capital punishment re-introduced \$1
  - G3 case for capital punishment proved beyond any shadow of doubt \$4
- G3 case for capital punishment proved beyond any shadow of doubt \$4
  - G4 confusion in public mind \$9
- G5 astonished at HS \$23
  - G1 hanging for terrorist murder \$16
- G6 impractical suggestion by HS \$24
  - G1 hanging for terrorist murder \$16

Appendix to Chapter 6 - references to Newspaper articles

Observer, 10th July 1983, p1.

Observer, 10th July 1983, p15.

Guardian, 11th July 1983, p1.

Guardian, 11th July 1983, p22.

Guardian, 12th July 1983, p1.

Guardian, 12th July 1983, p10.

Times, 13th July 1983, p1.

Times, 13th July 1983, p10.

Times, 14th July 1983, p1.

Times, 14th July 1983, p4.

Times, 15th July 1983, leader.

## CHAPTER 7

### A GOOD CASE FOR ARGUMENT?

#### End of an argument

This thesis is an example of the topic that it explores. It is intended to persuade the reader by putting forward a series of linked propositions to a point of view. It is an argument. As this is the end of the argument it is perhaps the appropriate point to refer to the role that the 'end of the argument' plays in the persuading process, before proceeding to the conclusion of this thesis.

Chapter 5 revealed that the more effective arguers were often able to find a suitable phrase to sum up or capture the essence of their preceeding argument. Simiarly many of the speakers in the capital punishment debate described in Chapter 6 ended their speeches with a careful summary of their arguments. Work by Miller (1964) showed that repetition and recency increase the ability of subjects to remember information. In addition data which is connected in some way can be more easily recalled. These experimental features and more general work on argumentation point to a significant role for the end of the argument in making that argument generally more or less pesuasive. The end of the argument presents an opportunity to draw together the different features and themes that have been presented in the main body of the argument. This latter activity has the effect of creating what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) refer to as 'convergence'. That is, the different themes come together to support each other and so add persuasive force to the argument as a whole. Convergence is closely related to the idea of consistency discussed in Chapters 4 and 6. The power of convergence lies in its ability to create for the



audience a system of concepts and links which is apparently self-consistent. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca point out however that this can be a double-edged sword, in that a conclusion which is too 'neat and tidy' when tackling a complex subject can be viewed suspiciously. In this case the convergence creates a lack of credibility for each argument, rather than strengthening them, because there is an expectation about the degree of convergence suitable to a particular area of study.

What is an appropriate level of convergence for this thesis? Because it is concerned with a subjective model of man, and thus of argument, the complexity and particularity of the data foreclose any 'tidy' solutions or proposals. For the activity to be practically useful however there should emerge guidelines and themes about the theory and practice of argument which would enable others to prepare or participate in argument which is more able to persuade.

#### The task of this thesis

Aristotle's advice on the conclusion of an argument was:

".... observe that you have done what you undertook to do.  
You must then state what you have said and why you have  
said it....."

(Aristotle, Rhetoric, Book III)

This thesis has been concerned with the role of argument in influencing people, with an emphasis on argument in an organizational setting. Argument has been defined for this purpose as the activity of persuading others to a point of view, through a primarily verbal or written interaction, in which propositions are made and supported.

It was the contention of Chapter 1 that persuasion of this sort is an important feature of organizational life, but one which has been neglected by theorists in favour of an emphasis on the social and political aspects of organizations. This neglect has occurred because argument studies have usually been set within a framework of logical and rational thought and philosophy which has little contact with the reality of everyday argument settings. However, the expectations of rational behaviour and discussion that arguers frequently bring to bear during an argument are powerful influences on the course of debate and need to be carefully examined. The aim was to re-consider argument as a means of persuading others rather than as a study in logical thought.

To achieve this aim a framework for the study of argument was constructed, in Chapter 2, based on a theory of man and a theory of thinking elaborated originally by Kelly. In this theory man is viewed as being who continually seeks to make sense of his environment through a process of interpreting events. He interprets events in such a way that they form a predictive base for future interpretation. It was argued that this framework is more useful for studying particular argument events than a framework of logical thought, since it reveals the cognitive system of each arguer, and is therefore able to explain the interpretation that each will give to arguments involved. A framework based on the presumed rationality or logical thinking of arguers' is not able to explain the frequent failure of arguers to act according to the pre-determined rules, other than to say that the arguers are not behaving according to the rules.

It was not a conceptually simple task to discuss argument, and take full account of the notion of rationality within a subjective model of man, since ideas of rationality are firmly welded to an altogether different model of man as a rational being. However the generality of the expectation of rationality in argument, as shown for example by attempted reliance on factual support, and in the expectation of consistency, demands that some explanation of rationality be included in any model of argument. The concepts of sociality and commonality within the framework of Personal Construct Theory provide a unified basis for attempting such a task. For Kelly each individual's way of making sense of experience (construct system) is necessarily unique to him, but through his interpretation of others' views he can come to an understanding of their way of making sense of the world. The existence of such an understanding potentially enables an argument between individuals, to the extent that they can play a social role with respect to each other. The interactions between Crossman and some of his opponents (Chapter 4) reveal the importance of sociality in being able to construct an argument that will persuade others. Beyond sociality where arguers may understand each other but still differ, lies the realm of common construal, where individuals construe experience in a similar way. They therefore agree on the interpretation that should be placed on experience. This leads to a vast reservoir of taken-for-granted interpretations of the world which influence debate by denying the feasibility of certain chains of thought. For instance, the debate between charity officers in Chapter 5 is markedly influenced in this way. Also to the extent that individuals agree upon the construal of experience their future

construal must take into account this agreement. In this way a notion of rationality is introduced into a subjective picture of construal.

A further aim, but one which follows from the adoption of Kelly's theory was the construction of a set of ideas and methods which would be of use to arguers in the course of argument. That is, it was important to build a theory which has practical consequences. The technique of cognitive mapping which is based on Personal Construct Theory was chosen as a practical method of recording and analysing argument.

Three settings were chosen for study in which it was felt by the researcher, and by those involved, that argument was significant in affecting outcomes. These were, a dispute over a planning decision as seen through the diaries of a significant actor in the event (Richard Crossman); a debate between charity officers on the use of volunteers; a debate in the House of Commons on capital punishment.

Each of the settings was intended to provide a rich source of data on a small number of arguments, and so explore the individual interpretation of each argument. The Hartley issue through the Crossman Diaries gives an insight into a private (not publicly expressed) assessment and consideration of arguments, and was used to explore the relationship between an individual's construct system and the arguments that he found persuasive, or constructed to persuade others. The research on the use of volunteers gave the opportunity to look at the progress of a debate between a number of individuals as it occurred, but with some insight into each arguer's views which had been developed in the preceeding stages of the research. The

final setting, the debate on capital punishment, took public arguments only and considered the effect of these during a debate. This was an important perspective because arguers often do not have access to others' views other than as expressed during a debate or meeting.

The above is a summary, following Aristotle's advice, of what was intended, what was done, and why it was done. But what sort of theory of argument has emerged from this thesis? There are two parts to the answer of this question. Firstly the type of theory that has emerged needs some explanation as a way of making sense of argument. Secondly the content of that theory needs to be summarized.

#### Making sense of argument

At the end of over one million words on the subject of argument, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca express the difficulty that they have had in keeping their treatise to a manageable size! The difficulty only partly reflects the pervasiveness of argument as a human activity, it also arises from their method of categorizing each aspect of argument as a separate entity. For example there are sections on argument and values, argument and logic, argument and authority. This obscures the underlying theory of argument, and since the categories can only function as a 'checklist' of issues to consider they are robbed of explanatory power. Rather than 'survey' aspects of argument in this way (which is a common approach to a large subject like this), this thesis aims to focus on a working theory which can be applied to any aspect of argument, and can explain and predict arguments in practice. It is therefore the

development of a 'way of looking' at argument. This way of looking has two parts; practical methods for the study and analysis of argument and a conceptual framework for making sense of argument. The next section tackles the issues of practice, and the final sections present a theory of argument.

### Practical methods for the study of argument

In Chapter 2 it was argued that one aim of this thesis is to produce practical ways of representing and studying argument. Chapters 3 to 6 described different research settings in which the methods of cognitive mapping were used in different ways to assist with the collection, analysis and study, of research data on argument. This section re-considers the propositions of Chapter 2 in relation to methodology and method in the light of the research experience.

It was established in Chapter 2 that the purpose of methodological choice is to match the methods with the aims of the research. Viewed in this way the adoption of particular research methods is itself a research proposition about the nature of the research, and the kind of theory that can be supported by the research (Blalock, F. and Blalock A. (1968). Whilst ultimately there can be no escape from the circular nature of methodological choice at a philosophical level, in as much as a research choice is a construal of experience it has a predictive utility in enabling the researcher (and others) to make sense of the world. In this latter context research choices can be compared to each other in respect of their utility for elaborating understanding. Therefore it is worthwhile to examine the usefulness of a particular method, but this would not be to argue that that one

method is necessarily better than others in all situations. Buckley and others for example suggest that a variety of methods are available for research each with strengths and weaknesses in relation to specific research aims (Buckley, J. Buckley, M. and Chiang, 1976).

The aim of this research was the understanding of persuasive argument, specifically an understanding of arguments which occur in organizational settings. This necessarily involves a study of 'how arguers actually argue' and thus the research is based on, and the conclusions are evaluated in respect of, data external to the researcher. This contrasts with many studies of argument where the research data is the reflections of the researcher alone. It also implies a more detailed and complex set of data than is sometimes used in logical studies of argument. This has implications for the type of research undertaken. For example, each of the settings described above, represented the ways in which arguments can be presented in organizations. Between them they cover the acts of reading arguments, listening to argument, and being involved in argument. In each case the arguments were those actively put forward by an arguer to whom the acceptance (or rejection) of those arguments mattered. Cognitive mapping seemed a natural choice to represent this sort of argument because it has already been extensively used in work involving active participation of clients, and the representation of individual cognitive systems (Eden, Jones and Sims 1983).

Chapter 2 stressed that cognitive mapping has similarities to other methods such as argumentation studies and Balance Theory, but offered

significant advantages as a practical tool. Have those advantages been realized in the research?

(1) Collecting and representing qualitative data

a) The causal nature of a cognitive map provided a way of representing the essential reasoning of an argument. It highlighted the structure of the argument and the links between different chains of argument.

The presentation of a cognitive map as a linked picture of the argument did seem to be helpful, for example to the participants in the charity project. Similarly in the recording of the capital punishment debate the map assisted considerably in identifying (as the debate occurred) arguments that had been used previously by the same speaker, or by other speakers.

b) Whilst the maps condense information to a certain extent, the use of contrasts where appropriate and the ability to stay close to the original language of the participants enabled the meaning intended to be retained. This was significant for example in Chapters 3 and 4 in interpreting the meaning of 'green belt' as used by Crossman.

c) The availability of a supporting computer package to assist with the process of cognitive mapping greatly simplified the storage, collection and comparison of data. It also incidentally encourages the researcher to more frequently change and re-consider data, and so avoid some of the bias inherent in 'first impressions'. It also more importantly enables the researcher to handle a much larger volume of data, and so there is less pressure to reduce data to a manageable level of aggregation in the early stages of research. The thesis has



deliberately treated the computer aspects of this work in a low key fashion, as though it were just another aid like a pencil. Readers, especially those less used to computers, may be concerned at this. Crucial to this treatment however is the complete sub-ordination of the computer software to the theory of cognitive mapping. That is, the computer representation is conceptually identical to cognitive mapping, and the constraints of the computer operation do not interfere with the data collection. In this regard the only feature of the software that was problematic was the restriction to concept descriptions of 80 characters. On occasion this did tend to encourage coding of concepts on original maps within this constraint. For the development of the software the ability to handle longer concepts and phrases would be useful.

d) In the charity project the participants found the use of cognitive maps and the computer models to be very useful ways of representing and recalling argument, especially where they had an idea that 'something had been said about this before', and could use the computer (or map) to search for relevant concepts and arguments. A similar advantage accrues to the researcher when comparing and working with the research data in the form of a computer model.

e) The simplicity and flexibility of a cognitive map in recording argument as a set of causally linked concepts is a neglected advantage of cognitive mapping. It was pointed up by the difficulties described in Chapter 2 of transferring an argument into a Balance Theory representation. Also the theoretical constraints of a cognitive map are less predominant at the data collection stage. For example, in argumentation studies, the need to distinguish

different categories of statement in the representation make the initial coding more difficult, and thereby more prone to theoretical bias.

In relation to theoretical bias however, cognitive mapping contains an implicit model of argument as a causal, 'if-then' process. It cannot therefore provide any statements on the wider issue of the utility of envisaging and representing argument in this way. This would require a study of another sort. However the work in Chapter 2 strongly suggests that this is a much used and common model of argument and is supported by other work on problem solving and thinking.

## (2) Analysis

Argumentation studies similarly collect statements and link them in a causal structure, not dissimilar to that of a cognitive map. However cognitive mapping provides theories and techniques which enable the researcher (or arguer) to go beyond description and to explore other features of the cognitive map. In this thesis use has been made of the analysis theories of cognitive mapping, which essentially relate theories of cognition to the structure of the map.

So for example, end points of an argument can be linked to concepts which have no further consequences. In the context of the Hartley debate, knowledge of Crossman's values identified in this way, was significant in explaining the persuasiveness of arguments. Thus the map is not only a method of representing cognition it also implies a complex theory of cognition. Other features of the map also provided interesting insights into the nature of argument. For example, the

lack of explicit contrasting poles in the representation of the capital punishment debate suggested that in public argument of this sort arguers may stress the poles that they support and 'hide' the opposite poles, which may provide the basis for counter argument, from opponents. Other methods related to cognitive mapping also provide structural analyses, although in these cases the emphasis is upon the mathematical properties of the structure rather than upon the significance for cognition of the appearance of particular structures (Hansen, Heitger and McKell, 1978).

As with the representation of data the use of the computer was an advantage, since the process of analysing and grouping maps for any reasonably large model would be time consuming and error prone. Moreover its tedious nature would actively discourage manual analysis of this sort. For the future development of the software a greater variety of analysis based on theory would be helpful.

Enough has been said of the research aims and design and the practical use of mapping, to support the overall approach proposed by this thesis to the study of argument as a method which can be generally and easily used by arguers. However, the resulting theory of argument must act as the principal basis for a final evaluation of the research.

#### A theory of argument

The theory is concerned with argument in organizations. An argument is taken to be a set of linked propositions or statements intended to persuade others to a point of view or course of action. This thesis

proposes that argument in this sense is conceptually isolable and is significant in many situations in determining or influencing outcomes. However, the neglect of argument as a study in its own right suggests that this view of argument as a significant influence, is either erroneous or unhelpful in making sense of events in organizations, and that attention to the social and political aspects of organizational life is more fruitful. Plato puts a similar thought in the words of Phaedrus:

"But I have been told, my dear Socrates, that what a budding orator needs to know is not what is really right, but what is likely to seem right in the eyes of the mass of people who are going to pass judgement."

(Hamilton 1973)

This is to focus on values and motivations as a cause of behaviour and to assume that under such influences argument will be less influential. It is to assume that self-interest necessarily supplants reason.

The research of this thesis strongly suggests that there are occasions when argument can be used to persuade others, and that values cannot always drive out reason. The link between persuasive argument and value is more complex than this. Moreover there is considerable scope for improving the study and practice of argument.

#### (1) When argument is significant

It would be naive and contrary to the findings of other research into organizational life to suppose however that there are not many occasions on which having a good argument is the least important factor in persuading others. Therefore it would be helpful to

identify features of settings which encourage participants to attend to argument, or increase the likelihood of argument having an influence. The settings studied in this thesis suggest the following aspects may be important:

- a) Both Crossman, and the charity officers looking for advice on the use of volunteers, felt themselves to be in a situation where they had little previous specific experience in the issues involved. Chapters 3 and 5 suggest that they were looking to elaborate their construct system in these areas, and so improve their ability to cope with the situation. They were then prepared to hear arguments from others who they felt were better informed. Thus being placed in a 'unknown' situation prompts a search for arguments to elaborate a construct system, and thus in Kelly's terms make it more useful, that is, more able to predict and control experience.
- b) The development of the Hartley issue also revealed that Crossman quite rapidly overturned his previous arguments in favour of the new arguments of his close advisors. This indicates that because it is a new area for him, he did not have the constructs to be able to reject a new argument. This is supported by Axelrod's work on the effect of novel argument in negotiations where arguments which were new to the audience had most effect in terms of persuading them to the arguer's point of view.
- c) In the debate on capital punishment it was clear that a large number of M.P.'s were for various reasons undecided. It is unlikely that any of the arguments that they heard were new to them in the sense that planning arguments were new to Crossman, especially as

there had been a widespread discussion of the issues in the preceding weeks. However some arguments were clearly decisive. In this case it seems likely that those who are undecided on an issue were searching for aspects of an argument which it made it more credible. So for example the presentation of a 'poor case' by one side can be very significant.

In each of these instances there is some sense that the audience does not currently have a model of the situation that will enable them to predict and control events. They are searching for additional argument to supplement their current construct system. Moreover in each of the examples studied the need is apparently for a linked set of ideas, that is, for additional explanatory power, rather than for additional information.

## (2) Consistency and persuasive argument

But Crossman's difficulties over Hartley, and the problems for Leon Brittain in the capital punishment debate indicate that an argument can be more powerful than just something that flourishes when the audience is particularly susceptible to persuasion. The charges of inconsistency brought against Crossman and Brittain were perhaps the critical features of the arguments which led to them being rejected. Consistency it seems is a necessary condition of a 'good case', although it may not be sufficient. A Kellian view of man as a being who essentially strives to create for himself an explainable and predictable world provides the basis for understanding the need for consistency in argument. Each of the settings, and much of the research in traditional argumentation, illustrates the disastrous

effects on the persuasiveness of arguments if they can be shown to be in some way inconsistent.

Inconsistency means that the audience is unable to make sense of an argument, and so are reluctant to adopt it within their cognitive system. Also it throws doubt upon other aspects of the arguers arguments, which explains why Crossman chose a strategy of attempting to isolate the Hartley decision from the rest of his policies.

Without a Kellian view of man consistency and rationality are linked primarily to notions of logical consistency and the explanatory power of consistency is much reduced. The concept of man developing a personal construct system to make sense of his world, enables a much wider and more useful interpretation of consistency. This is because the meaning of consistency is specifically related to a view of the world, and can be judged in relation to that view. As Chapter 2 discusses, a global conception of consistency has no meaning, consistency is always 'consistency with respect to something else'. In effect the concept of rationality which has logical associations is replaced with the notion of predictability which is individually based, but will have wider implications when individuals play a social role with respect to each other.

### (3) The influence of the taken-for-granted world

But each individual is not free to develop a uniquely idiosyncratic view of the world in order to explain it to himself. Through interaction with others he becomes aware of their construal, and to the extent that individuals construe experience in similar ways they

can be said to share experience. For the researcher a suprising feature of the arguments described in the thesis was the extent to which they refer to, and make use of a vast reservoir of shared understandings. The taken-for-granted aspects of the world pose significant constraints on the persuasiveness of arguments that are not seen to be in accord with such 'social' and 'physical' facts. Thus in Chapter 5 the debate about volunteers was virtually blocked by the social facts created by the anecdotes of the charity officers, and the arguments on capital punishment were frequently linked to agreed statistics in one way or another.

The relationship between consistency and 'facts' introduces the idea of degree of certainty or modality in argument. Chapter 1 demonstrated the effect of agreed context on the modality that was acceptable as persuasive, by comparing simple arguments in physical and social science. In many instances audiences demand a measure of the certainty with which the argument can be established. The bait of sure and certain knowledge was described in Chapter 1 as a crucial appeal of rationality. In a Kellian view of man, the lure of certainty is the lure of being able to create a truly predictable explanation of experience. A certain world is a predictable world. Thus many arguments attempt to link their propositions with aspects of the world which are generally taken to be more certain, and physical evidence plays an important role here. What is interesting about the capital punishment debate is not that the physical evidence was particularly conclusive in this case, but that so many arguers felt the need to pay some attention to it regardless of its 'quality'.

Linked to these notions of a taken-for-granted world is the influence



of argument that presents an impression of inevitability of its consequences. In both arguments around the use of volunteers and in the capital punishment debate vicious circles of argument were identified and had a significant influence on the persuasiveness of opposing arguments. The failure of supporters of restoration to adequately tackle this sort of loop seriously weakened their case.

The implication of this is that a persuasion can either occur through the statement of the loop, or alternatively through breaking the loop with a counter argument. The development of the arguments in the later stages of the work with charity officers showed how arguments which can challenge the 'taken for granted' features of the world can be persuasive. But such arguments run the risk of creating inconsistencies with widely held beliefs, as Crossman's attempt to re-define the nature of green belt indicated.

#### (4) Values and persuasive argument

At the opposite end of the conceptual spectrum to physical evidence (within this thesis), are the values which motivate and influence each arguer. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca put it no stronger than that people are pre-disposed by their values to accept some arguments more readily than others. In effect this thesis has explored the workings of this mechanism and has proposed that values, as was shown with Crossman, significantly determine the argument strategies chosen, and the arguments that are likely to appeal. But this is not to argue that reason can be ignored for the sake of self-interest. If reason is understood as a need for an individual to have a coherent model for making sense of the world, then, as Brittain's

defeat shows, his values led him to propose a model for dealing with capital punishment which many found to be inconsistent, and thus not reasonable. It was a view of his arguments as inconsistent and not a disagreement with his value judgements that led many M.P.'s to vote against Brittain on this issue.

Man is both valuing and reasoning, and values will influence the persuasiveness of argument. Chapter 3 in particular showed that the more important a value is for an individual (further up the value hierarchy) then the greater is the influence of those values on the assessment of argument and the choice of argument strategy.

Whilst an operational definition of values was attempted in this thesis, the meaning of 'values' and the relation between them and argument is still complex and confused, and much more research will be needed on this aspect. Other lines of inquiry suggested by this thesis are discussed in the following section.

#### Further research

Whilst the thesis has shown good support for the relevance of argument as a means of persuading others, a different type of design is needed to explore the nature and extent of situations in which this may be relevant, since it is not a comprehensive work in the style of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. A wider range of settings would need to be explored, and more explicit attention paid to factors other than argument. This thesis has concentrated on situations where the influence of argument is relatively well established, but in many settings this is more problematic, and

indeed in the work with charity officers, it was clear that, for instance, interpersonal issues were relevant to an understanding of some of the debates.

On a lesser point if the theories are to be more widely accepted and used then some attention must be paid to the language of Personal Construct Theory which is itself a bar to understanding. Some attempt has been made to cast theory into more everyday terms, but this needs to be done on a more complete scale.

The relationship between a taken-for-granted world, and the support that this offers for one line of argument rather than another is a fascinating area of study. Whilst it has been tackled to some extent through work on bounded vision, a study of the prevalence of themes and an understanding of logic would reveal more basic assumptions about argument and what it is to persuade others. The work of Holton (1973) on themes and Goodwin and Wenzel (1979) on the logic of folklore could provide starting points for a larger study of the influence of the taken-for-granted understandings of the world.

Again in this study there is not enough variation between settings to look more generally at the link between the specific context in which an argument occurs, and the expectations of the arguers of the type of argument 'required' by the context. A wider study is needed on this since the evidence from these settings firmly suggests a powerful influence of the context on the course of the argument. Perhaps the work of Toulmin on different arguments for different disciplines may be a suitable starting point for this. Related to this is need for a more detailed look at the links between modality and persuasive

argument, In this respect additional features to take more account of the strength of belief and the relative importance of concepts in a cognitive map would be helpful, although obtaining a good balance between the ease of use of cognitive mapping and a more detailed coding requirement would be difficult.

A considerable amount of work on the study of argument is progressing through the work of persuasion and communication theorists and argumentation studies; there is a research need to more comprehensively survey and relate this work to organizational theory.

#### Argument as a means of persuading others

But what does this thesis tell the potential arguer about the nature and practice of argument? Perhaps this is best answered through the response to questions that an arguer might ask of argument.

##### (1) What is an argument?

Argument should be placed in a wider context than that of logical or rational demonstration. An argument which is designed to persuade others offers the audience a set of linked ideas which enables them to elaborate their thinking, to better make sense of experience.

However, the context should not be too widely interpreted since argument as a form of persuasion carries with it expectations about the nature of that activity which influence the way in which arguments are evaluated. Nonetheless there is something about having a good case, as Thorndike put it, that makes it worth achieving.

That something is the ability to persuade others through offering them a system of ideas which makes their experience more predictable.

(2) How may argument be represented?

Perhaps the study and practice of argument has been limited by the lack of methods which can be easily applied to record argument as it occurs. Cognitive mapping offers one way of simply and quickly recording a debate in such a way that the structure of the argument can be highlighted and readily accessible. Such other methods that are available are more generally linked to rational theories of argument, and so have been avoided by those concerned with argument in everyday settings.

(3) When may argument be influential?

Organizational theory sometimes gives the impression that the act of persuading someone by argument is the last and most naive resort of the skilled organizational politician. Yet this thesis has provided examples of argument powerfully capturing the adherence of organizational actors. In each case there was a sense of an individual searching for new explanations on a topic with which they considered themselves to be less experienced. It was also apparent that provided the arguments presented were a coherent set of ideas then the individual was not able to reject the argument, because he did not have the concepts with which to do this.

(4) What makes argument persuasive?

For a set of ideas to be accepted the audience must not only be susceptible to receiving ideas, the ideas themselves must form a coherent, consistent body of explanation. Gilbert and Mulkay (1982) suggest that anyone who attempts to persuade others must make their argument plausible, realistic and usable. This thesis can give some

meaning to these terms. Arguments must be plausible in that they link to the expectations and common construal that the audience have.

Arguments must be realistic in that they link to the theories and beliefs that each individual holds. Arguments must be usable in that they provide concepts which enable others to make better sense of experience. This thesis has revealed a variety of situations where some or all of these requirements were not met and consequently the arguments failed to persuade.

#### (5) How do values affect argument?

Man is both a valuing and a reasoning being. The paradox of arguing man is that he will argue 'rationally' for a cherished ideal, and hold as a supreme value the concept of rational argument. This thesis suggests that values must be understood in terms of specific individual matters of interest. Arguers tend to assess argument in relation to their value hierarchy, and when arguments are judged to affect particular values, then this will affect the argument strategies chosen, and the perceived persuasiveness of arguments. Knowledge of individual value systems is therefore important in constructing arguments designed to persuade others.

#### In conclusion

We think we know, suggested Roger Bacon, when we know causes (Lindberg 1982). Argument is a tentative matter (Law and Williams 1982); it is to propose a set of relationships and values which create a more explainable world.

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